Mercy Triumphant

IN THE

Converſion of Sinners

UNTO

GOD.

Being an Account of the Remarkable

Experiences

Of many Eminent Chriſtians in ſeveral Declarations made by them upon Solemn Occaſions. Diſplaying the exceeding Riches of the Free Grace and Love of God in ſupporting them under violent Temptations, and the Troubles of their deſpairing Conſciences, and at length filling their Souls with Divine Conſolations.

Formerly publiſhed by divers faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel in and about *London*, and now revived for the comforting of poor doubting Believers.

By *W. D.*

Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my Soul, Pſal 66.

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TO THE READER.

I *Am very ſenſible that Diſcourſes of Converſion in this Age are much ſlighted and derided by ſome kind of men that make high pretences to* Learning *and* Knowledge, *who tell us that this talk of Converſion is fitter for* Pagans *and* Infidels *to hear than* Chriſtians *and* Proteſtants; *But as ſome people ſpeak againſt Learning that have none themſelves, ſo ſuch Perſons may be thought to inveigh againſt Converſion, and the Spirit of God, becauſe they never experienced the effects of either of them in themſelves; For certainly,*

1. *It is not the taking on us the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity that can ſave our Souls, or make us happy forever. If to ceaſe to be* Jews *or* Pagans *and to put on the Chriſtian Profeſſion were ſufficient, then the Chriſtians of* Sardis *and* Laodicea, *who had a name to live, would never have been condemned by our bleſſed Lord, and threatned to be ſpewed out,* Rev. 3. 1, 16. *Are there not many thae name the name of Jeſus Chriſt, that yet depart not from Iniquity, and*

profess they know God, but in works deny him, and will God receive these for True Converts, because they are turned to the Christian Religion.

II. *It is not being Baptized into the Christian Faith, nor being Washed in the Laver of Regeneration that can denominate a Man a real and sincere Christian. Many take the Press Money and wear the Livery of Christ, that yet never stand to their Colours nor follow their Leader*; Ananias *and* Saphira, *and* Simon Magus *were baptized as well as the rest*; *How fondly then do many men mistake, deceiving and being deceived, dreaming that the effectual Grace of God is necessarily joyned to the outward administration of Baptism, and that being Converted and Regenerated already when Baptized, they need no more: But if this were so, then all that were baptized in their Infancy must necessarily be saved, because the promise of Pardon and Salvation is made to Conversion and Regeneration, and we need look no further to see our Names written in Heaven, but to search the Register and see whether we were baptized, and the Certificate of our Baptism will be the fairest evidence for Heaven, and we need only to cry God mercy and be absolved by the Minister at our* Death, *and we shall inherit the Kingdom of God. But let me tell you from the living God, that whatever benefits you receive by*

Baptism,

baptiſm, yet if when you come to years you be unholy, unclean, malicious, covetous, a ſcoffer, or the like, you cannot be ſaved except you be renewed again by repentance and a through and powerful change of your heart and life.

III. *It is not Moral Righteouſneſs that will evidence us to be Chriſtians; we muſt exceed the* Scribes *and* Phariſees; *And though the bleſſed Apoſtle* Paul *before his Converſion ſays, that he* was touching the Righteouſneſs of the Law blameleſs, *Phil.* 3. *So that none could charge him with the leaſt immorality, and though the ſelf juſtifying* Phariſee *could ſay* I am no Extortioner, Adulterer, Unjuſt, *&c.* Luke 18. 11. *yet this was not ſufficient; Thou muſt have ſomething more than all this to ſhew, or elſe God will not juſtifie thee. I condemn not Morality, but we are not to reſt there. Piety includes* Morality, *as Chriſtianity doth Humanity, and Grace includes Reaſon, but we muſt not divide the two Tables.*

IV. *External Conformity to the Rules of Piety is not enough to make us true Chriſtians; Many have a* Form of Godlineſs *without the Power; they may pray long, faſt often, hear gladly, and be very forward in the ſervice of God, though coſtly and expenſive, and yet be ſtrangers to Chriſtianity, and the divine* Life; *It will not be enough for them to plead at the great* Day *of Account that they*

kept their Church, said their Prayers, received the Sacrament constantly, gave Alms, or the like; For there is no outward service but an Hypocrite may perform it, even to the giving all his goods to the poor and his body to be burned, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3.

V. *A Seeming Conformity to the will of God, occasioned either by the restraint of humane Laws, Education, Afflictions or the like, can never give us assurance of eternal happiness; 'Tis too common and easy, to mistake Education for the Grace of God, but if this were true, who was a better man than* Jehoash, *who while his Uncle lived was very forward in Gods service, and calls upon him to repair the house of the Lord,* 2 Kings 12. 2, 7. *yet there was nothing but good Education all this while, for when his good Tutor was taken out of the way, he appears to have been only chained up, and presently falls to Idolatry; so in case of humane Laws, and Afflictions, though men may seem very conformable while they are restrained by them, yet that being removed many throw of all, and commit iniquity with greediness.*

Having briefly declared what true Christianity is not, I shall in short discover what it is; Conversion or true Religion consists in the thro' change both of the heart and life, by the Spirit of God, thr ough the merits and Intercession of Jesus Christ; *Where this is in truth,*

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it goes throughout all the powers, principles and practices of a man; His mind is changed, and the scales of his natural ignorance fall off, so that God and his glory weigh down all carnal and worldly Interests, and he is turned from darkness to light. He that thought formerly there was little hurt in sin, now comes to see it to be the chief of evils; Heretofore he saw no form nor comeliness in his holy Redeemer that he should desire him, but now he finds him to be the hid Treasure, and the Pearl of price, for which he is willing to part ~~with all, to~~ purchase it. Now God is all to him, and he values his favour and the light of his countenance above all the good that he formerly inquired after, and set his heart upon. Let the world now present her self in all the glory of her Kingdoms, yet his Soul will prefer a naked, a crucified, a persecuted Christ before her, and he will cry out, The Lord is my portion saith my soul: Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee; God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.

He had rather be gracious than great, and had rather be the holiest man upon Earth, than the most learned the most famous or the most prosperous.

His Joys are changed, he now rejoyceth in the ways of Gods Testimonies more than in all

Riches; He delights in the Law of the Lord, of which he formerly had little Savour; He hath no such joy as in the thoughts of Christ and fruition of his company forever.

His cares and fears are altered, he was once careful about the things of this life, but now his great solicitude is how to secure his Soul, and everlasting concerns; He used to fear nothing so much as the loss of his Estate, Reputation, Friends, or Pleasures. Nothing sounded so terrible to him as pain, poverty or disgrace; Now these are little to him in comparison with the dishonour and displeasure of God; It pierces his heart to think of losing Gods favour or of being parted from his blessed Saviour.

His love runs a new course and he (like the antient Father) can scarce find words sweet enough to express his affections to his well beloved Jesus, "Let me see thee O Light of mine eyes; Come O thou joy of my Spirit. Let me behold "thee O the gladness of my heart; Let me love "thee O Light of my Soul; Appear unto me "O my chief delight, my sweet Comforter; O "my God, my Life, & the whole glory of my Soul, "Let me find thee, O Desire of my heart; Let "me hold thee O Love of my Soul; Let me im-"brace thee, and possess thee O heavenly Bride-"groom.

His Sorrows have now a Vent by the view of his Sins, the sight of a Crucified Christ which did

did scarce move him before. how much doth it affect his heart; His hatred boils, his anger burns against sin, all the faculties and members of his Soul and Body that were formerly instruments of sin are now become the holy Utensils of Christs living Temple.

That eye which was once wandring, wanton, haughty, and covetous, is now imployed (as Marys*) weeping over his sins, in beholding God in his works, in reading his word, in searching for Objects of* Charity *and Mercy, and seeking all opportunities to do him service.*

That ear that was opened to Satan's *call, and like a vitiated appetite, relished nothing better than filthy or at least frothy unprofitable discourse and the laughter of Fools, is now boared to hear the sweet voice of Jesus, and is open to his Teachings; it now says,* Speak Lord, *for thy* Servant heareth, *and waits for his word as the rain, which is swetter to him than the honey and the honey comb, or his appointed food.*

That head which was filled with carnal contrivances and designs, is now imployed in matters of greater concern, and studies how it may perform the will of God; *His thoughts are now more intent about his duty than his gain, and his principal business is how he may please God and avoid Sin.*

His heart which was full of pollution and defilement, is now become an Altar of divine

Incense,

Incense, where the fire of Celestial Love is continually burning, and from whence the dayly Sacrifice of Prayer and Praise, and the sweet perfume of holy Desires, Ejaculations and Soliloquies are constantly ascending.

His mouth is become a well spring of Life, his tongue is as choice Silver, & his lips feed many; Now the Salt of heavenly Grace hath seasoned his speech and purged out all its corruption; Hath cleansed it from its former filthy communication, flatery, boasting, railing, lying, swearing, backbiting, which once issued out like flashes of infernal fire, from the Hell that was in his heart.

His throat that was once an open Sepulchre, now sends forth the sweet breath of Prayer and holy Discourse, and the man speaks in another Tongue, even the language of Canaan, *and is never so well pleased as when talking of God Christ, and the glorious things of another world His mouth bringeth forth Wisdom, and his tongue is become the Silver Trumpet of his Makers Praise and Glory.*

To conlude, his Conversation is in Heaven, and the New Man takes a new course, in his life and practice; when God hath given him the new heart, and writ his Law in his mind, he forthwith walks in his Statutes, and keeps his Judgments, and though sin, like a wearisome and unwelcome guest God knows, dwells in him, yet it hath no more dominion over him;

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He hath his fruit unto holiness, and though he hath many a fall, yet the Law and Life of Jesus is his Rule, and he hath an unfeigned respect to all Gods Commandments, *and keepeth a good conscience willing in all things to live honestly and without offence towards* God *and Men.*

In such a state as this no doubt, were those eminent Christians *who made the following solemn Declarations, of the gracious Experiences which they had of the exceeding love & favour of* God *to their Souls in supporting them under their doubts and difficulties, and afterwards confirming their minds in the good ways of the* Lord. *They had found the* Lord *to be merciful and full of goodness, compassion and truth, and therefore thought that they ought with their mouths to shew forth his Praise, both to stir up others to joyn with them therein, and likewise to incourage poor, distressed, disconsolate* Christians *to put their trust in the Almighty, since if they persevere sincerely in seeking his face he will certainly at length discover himself unto them and fill their hearts with joy and gladness.*

And it may be reasonably hoped that these heavenly Experiences will be very effectual and conducive thereunto, since they consist of such variety of Tryals, Temptations and Exercises of Spirit, *that we can scarce suppose but the most disquieted despairing Soul may here meet with*

ease:

Caſes as dark and comfortleſs as his own, and and likewiſe find what a good end the Lord *in his due time brought all the troubles of his afflicted* Children *unto; And for this purpoſe no doubt they were firſt Collected and Publiſhed ſome years ſince by divers Faithful and Pious Miniſters of the Goſpel, in and about* London; *and though they have omitted the Names of the Perſons becauſe no glorying ſhould appear therein, yet they were then known to be Chriſtians who had truly taſted & ſeen that the* Lord *was gracious; Now that the* God *of all* Peace *and* Conſolation *may give his bleſſing hereunto is the hearty and earneſt* Prayer *and deſire of him who is, A wellwiſher to the* Souls *of Men.*

W. D.

Mercy

Mercy Triumphant in the Converſion of Sinners to God.

Diſcovered in the Remarkable and Gracious Experiences of ſeveral Eminent Chriſtians.

1. *Experiences of Mr.* J. R. *Miniſter of the Goſpel.*

BEfore I give an account of my own Experiences, I ſhall briefly diſcover the *Duty*, and uſefulneſs of communicating Chriſtian Experiences.

1. It is a Duty, becauſe it hath been the practice of the People of God in former Ages: When our bleſſed Saviour had cleanſed the Leper, *Matth.* 8. 4. he bid him, Go, and ſhew it for a Teſtimony; and *Matth.* 28. 7. the Angels by *Mary Magdalen*, Go quickly and tell the Diſciples that Chriſt whom they ſought was riſen; and *verſe* 10. Chriſt meeting with the two *Marys*, renews the Precept, *Go tell my Brethren*, &c. For now ye know it, and have ſeen me, and can aſſuredly ſay that I am riſen. And in *Joel* 1. 3. *Tell your Children, and let your Children tell their Children, and their Children another Generation.* And this is obſerved by the Jews at this day out of *Deut.* 6. 7. And to add more Solemnity to the commemoration of God's Law, and their deliverance from *Egypt*, they write it down in a piece of Parchment, and then rolling it up ſuperſcribe

perſcribe it, *To the Lord*, and faſten it to the Wall, or the Poſt of the Door on the right hand of the Entrance, and as often as they go in and out they touch, and kiſs it with great affection and devotion: This alſo is commanded, *Pſal.* 34: 8. *Come taſte and ſee that the Lord is good*; and 1 *Theſ.* 5. 11. *Comfort your ſelves together, and edifie one another, even as alſo ye do.* And what is more excellent for edification and conſolation, than to tell what God hath done for our Souls, whereby many who have met with the like, may be confirmed and comforted. *David* in *Pſal.* 16, crys out, *I will tell of all thy wondrous works*; and *Pſal.* 66. 19. *Come and hear* (ſays he) *all ye that fear the Lord, and I will declare what he hath done for my Soul*; and verſe 19. *Verily God hath heard me, and hath not turned away his mercy from me.* And *Pſal.* 18. 30. *The way of God is perfect* (ſaith *David.*) How knoweſt thou this, *David?* Oh! ſays he, *I have tryed it*; *The Word of the Lord is tryed*; I can tell it by experience, and I know that *he is a Buckler to all that truſt in him.* And *Pſal.* 51. He promiſes, that as ſoon as his broken bones were healed, and the joy of his Salvation was reſtored to him, he would preſently preach it, and *teach tranſgreſſors God's ways, and ſinners ſhould be converted unto him*: He would give ſinners warning of ſin, and uncleanneſs, and tell them what it was to lie in helliſh horrours, to have a wounded Spirit, an accuſing Conſcience, and the Indignaton of an angry frowning God. Thus alſo the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11. *Knowing the terrour of the Lord, we perſwade men*: We tell them the ſad condition they are in, now we are delivered out of it, on purpoſe to perſwade them to believe in God, to get out of their carnal ſtate, and to taſt and ſee the mercy, grace, and love of God in Chriſt in the Goſpel, and as

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the Apoſtle *Peter* ſays, 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. *If ſo be ye have taſted how gracious the Lord is*: O then you will ſay, It is good, it is ſweet, and will incourage others to come and be made partakers thereof.

2. As this is a Duty, and hath been the practice of Primitive Times, ſo it is very uſeful and neceſſary for ſeveral Reaſons. 1. It is a bearing the beſt outward Teſtimony to God and his Attributes that can be, when we can ſay by experience that God is gracious, loving, ſlow to anger, ready to forgive, that he is true and faithful, for we have tryed him, and therefore know it; and the want of this makes us ſo often queſtion his care, truth, mercy and love to us in times of Tryal. 2. It is neceſſary to communicate Experiences, thereby to diſcover thoſe that are ſound Chriſtians and ſincere Believers, as far as may be judged by outward appearance, converſation, and communication. 3. It may be uſeful to prevent us from cenſuring, or having hard thoughts of thoſe who are under ſpiritual Agonies, Afflictions and Temptations; all which our bleſſed Redeemer himſelf *ſuffered, that he might be able to ſuccour them that are tempted*, Heb. 2. 18. So that when we ſee poor Souls ſet on the wrack, and roaring under torments, and crying out, Oh! they are damned, undone, forſaken of God, *&c.* Yet we ought not to condemn them, for even then they may be the dear Children of God, and may paſs a wrong Sentence upon themſelves, ſo long as they lie in deſpair, and under the ſenſe of their own ruinous condition, till they find help and ſalvation in Jeſus Chriſt; of which you may find divers Inſtances in the following Experiences. 4. By theſe Experiences we may learn how various the Lord is in his ways and workings; as the Apoſtle ſays, *Heb.* 1. 1. *God who at ſundry times, and in divers manners ſpake*

to

to the Fathers by the Prophets,&c. To ſome he comes in one way, like a Lion, and to ſome in another, like a Lamb; to ſome by ſickneſs, to others by croſſes and loſſes; to ſome by Sermons, and to others by Reading the Scriptures, Chriſtian Converſe and the like. Again, to ſome the Lord diſcovers himſelf in an extraordinary way, as in Dream, Trance, Voice or Viſion; but neither theſe, nor the ordinary manifeſtations of God's Love are to be regarded, unleſs they are confirmed by the Scriptures, and the Promiſes therein; and unleſs they alſo make the perſon more holy, humble, and mean in his own Eyes, and more to admire the Free Grace of God to him a poor unworthy ſinner; and the Lord knows what means is moſt proper, for that which will work upon one man, may have no operation upon another. 5. Experiences do oblige and allure Chriſtians exceedingly, to rely upon God, and to believe in him. For, as *David* ſays, *Pſal.*22.1,2. *I cry, I roar night and day for deliverance*; but what Argument doth he uſe? ſee *verſe* 4, 5. *Our Fathers truſted in thee, they truſted, and thou didſt deliver them; they cryed unto thee, and were delivered; they truſted in thee, and were not confounded.* Therefore deliver me too, for I truſt in thee. So *Pſal.* 31. 24. *Be of good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord*; even as he hath ſtrengthened my heart, and heard my voice and crys (as in the verſes before) ſo he will yours, O all ye Saints! Thus the Woman of *Samaria*, *John* 4. 28, 29. ran into the City, and declared her Experiences of the Meſſiah that was come, and how he told her all things, *&c.* And obſerve how this weak means wrought upon many; for, *verſe* 29. it is ſaid, *That many of the Samaritans believed in him, becauſe of the ſayings of the poor Woman.* And thus *Junius* profeſſeth,

fesseth, that the very first thing which converted him him from Atheism, and made him believe in God, was a Conference with a poor Country-man near *Florence* in *Italy*.

There are many other benefits that arise from Christians communicating their Experiences of the favour, love, and goodness of God towards them; some being informed, others confuted, others comforted, and confirmed in the good ways of the Lord; so that it is to be wisht, that this Christian duty were more practised, whereby others might be incouraged to trust in God, by hearing what he hath done for our Souls. I shall add no more, but proceed to give an account of the wonderful dealings of the Almighty with my unworthy self.

TO give a formal Account of my Life would be tedious, though I may safely say, in every year sinee I can remember, I have been inricht with so many and such remarkable Experiences, as may make some rather admire than believe them: And first, when I was a School-Boy at *Malden* in *Essex*, I began to be rouzed by two Men, Mr. *Will. Fenner*, and Mr. *Stephen Marshall*, about the tenth year of my Age; for before that, I was I know not what, though I was kept to read every day, was Catechised, with other good Orders: But then hearing Mr. *Fenner* full of Zeal, and seeing him thundering about, and beating the Pulpit, I was amazed, and thought he was mad, wondring what he meant: Now whilst I was gazing upon him, I was suddenly struck, and perceived it was we that were mad, which made him seem to be so: Oh! says he, 'You 'knotty, rugged, proud pieces of flesh, you stony, 'rocky, flinty, hard hearts, what will you do when 'you are roaring in Hell among the damned, &c.' This made me at first astonisht, and run so often

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in my mind afterward, that I began to be troubled, ſcared, and affrighted, and for fear of going to Hell, I fell to praying, hearing Sermons, reading the Scriptures morning and evening, though I underſtood little, but only thought the bare reading ſufficient: I learnt to pray firſt out of Books, and got all the Graces, ſo called, by heart; and after Family Prayers, I was every night afraid the Devil would carry me away to Hell, if I did not ſay my prayers, *Our Father*, &c. and *I believe in God*, &c. with the Ten Commandments and my little Catechiſm of Dr. *Hall's*, which I had learnt: And this I did duly every night before I durſt ſleep, which I thought a ſufficient defence to preſerve me from the Devil's tearing me in pieces before morning. Yet ſometimes when I was ſleepy, to make more haſte, I would ſay ſome of them in the Chimney-corner whilſt I was undreſſing me; thinking all was well enough, ſo it were but done: Yea, when I was extreamly ſurprized with fear of the Devil, being apt to fancy any thing to be him, I often ſaid all my Prayers and Commandments twice over, ſuſpecting I had not ſaid them well enough, or had for haſte left out ſome of them, and the like; and thus as the Apoſtle ſays, *When I was a Child, I did childiſh things*, and thought all this was very well; and oft-times I would get one of my Play-fellows to walk alone with me, and would tell him of Sin and Hell, and ſuch matters, for they ran always in my mind, and I was in a deſperate fear.

At length going to hear Mr. *Marſhall*, whilſt I was nodding, and almoſt aſleep, his powerful voice awakened me, thundring in my Ears the dreadful danger of ſuch as were drowſie, and ſlept, and ſlumbred away their Salvation, which I thought was ſpoken directly to me, and had ſuch prevalency upon me, that I ſtarted up with an aking heart,

heart, being much terrified at his words, which he ſtill purſued, and wounded me to the heart, when he told us; 'That when time was paſt, it 'could never be recalled again, and that there was 'no other way but to double our diligence, and 'redeem the time we had loſt by making more 'haſte, and taking more care and pains, or elſe we 'ſhould be utterly loſt and undone: This touched me ſufficiently, ſo that I could not forbear weeping extreamly: After Sermon I went home, and ſitting alone, I fell to crying and complaining that I had loſt my time, taking up a reſolution never to ſleep at Church again, and I think I have kept that ſolemn Covenant to this very day.

After this, I was not content with my former cuſtomary duties, for now I muſt double them, and do more than before; wherefore I reſolved to write down the Sermons I heard, as well as I could, but having little skill to write faſt or orderly, I ever obſerved the Doctrines, Reaſons and Heads of the Uſes, which I got by heart, repeating the morning Sermon at noon, and the evening Sermon at night, ſo that I could the readilier anſwer my Father when he examined me; and then I learnt out of a Book a prayer for morning, and another for evening: This courſe I continued for nine or ten years together, ſo that at length I attained to repeat to my ſelf the ſubſtance of ſome Sermons which I had heard ſeven or eight years before; and the Lord led me on in this orderly way (I know not how) without the advice or direction of any perſon upon Earth, whereby I hoped to work out my Salvation, and redeem my time. But this I muſt ſay, from this Form I learnt much of God and Goodneſs; and what I did at firſt for fear of Hell, at laſt I performed out of love to Heaven, yea out of love to God and Chriſt, as if it were without

Heaven.

Heaven. I used this method some years after I came to the University of *Cambridg* whereby I was enabled to Recollect several Mens Sermons 10 years after they were Preached, and likewise with Gods assistance to Preach my self, at 18. or 19. years of age, to the great wonder of many.

Thus you hear how formal I was, and I must needs confess it was more out of fear than love that I maintain'd this strictness in the duties of Religion; But not long after I was further awakened by my own Father Mr. *N. R.* Minister in *Essex* who preaching upon the Good *Samaritan*, and shewing Christs Compassion to wounded Souls he in reproof of Sinners declared, "That they were more guilty "than the hardhearted *Jews*, that they Crucifie "Christ afresh, and have no Compassion on him "now he is in Glory, but Spit on him, and make "him Suffer, and that his blood would rise up in "Judgment against them, for if *Abels* a meer mans "did so, much more his, and if *David* prayed to "be delivered from blood guiltiness, how ought "we to beg of God to be freed from being guilty of "the precious blood of the Son of God and Savi-"our of the World. This he Preached and pressed so powerfully, that I was thrown into a trembling, as lying under the guilt of Christs blood, and was long perplext with the horror thereof.

One Remarkable Passage I must never forget which happened in my Youth, that being one time playing and running about my Father's house, with my other Companions, I know not upon what occa-on, I uttered vain words, crying, O Lord, which we were not suffered to do, whereupon my heart was instantly smitten and I was suddenly set a running by I know not what Power or Spirit, as if I had been possest, and could not possibly stay my self till I was carried with much violence to a little gate

way,

way, where to my apprehension I perceived, as plainly as ere I saw any thing by the Sun-shine, a naked Sword glittering with a sharp edge, which took up the whole space of the Gate from one Post to the other with a broad blade most keen and cruel; at which sad sight, being almost distracted with fear, I shriekt out, yet had not the least power to stop, but was forcibly carried toward it, so that the edge of the threatning blade meeting with my *Body*, it seemed to me impossible that I should escape death, and I made no other account but to be quite off, and parted asunder; but afterwards being hurried through with that irresistible force, I had strength to stay a little beyond it, and to contemplate the desperate peril that I was in; I stood as one amazed, and scarce knew whether I were alive or dead, yea I could hardly believe my self to be any thing but a dead man, or at least mortally and deadly wounded, if not wofully and deplorably cut in twain: Oh! how I stood trembling and turmoiled in my thoughts, until after some time the Vital blood which was retired for the hearts defence, began to disperse and circulate in its former course, and then I lookt about, and turned to the gate way, but the appearance was passed away, the Sword gone and vanisht, whilst I was left alone (the rest running away) in a Labarynth of fears, griefs, and doubts, free from any wound without, but deeply and wofully wounded within, and never since to the praise of Gods grace as I know of, have I made such vain and irreverent mention of the name of the Lord. But good God! what was thy will herein? Thou who art not tyed to means or order, best ordereſt and disposest of all things for thine own design and glory! and so this was I am sure, but what it was I know not; yet it left a lasting impression upon me, and the Scar is still to be

seen

be seen in my heart, though the wound be healed.

But alas! how long and lamentably did I lye afflicted, and in continual fears after this? Every Thunder and Lightning I lookt upon as fatal to me, and sent to destroy me, and then I would fall to my prayers, and saying my Creed and Commandments, and to my Sermons as fast as I could, that I might be found well doing at least, if not as a Charm to preserve me, or a challeng to God by virtue of them to keep and defend me; And I remember it was a great comfort to me to consider that others did not do as I did, but that they altogether slighted holiness, prayer, *&c.* and lived wickedly and carnally, in drunkeness, disobedience, Sabbath-breaking, and other sins every day; this I was so far from grieving at and weeping over, that I, in my heart, rejoyced in it, as having more hopes, and fancying my self to be in a better condition than they, and therefore should have more favour from the hand of God; but all this while, (like an *Israelite* in *Ægypt*) I work't for life, and my Services were my Saviours, and I would often take occasion to discourse with my Brothers, Sisters, and School-fellows, about Heaven and Hell, and what a hard thing it was to be saved.

Being at *Malden* in *Essex* some time after, I had a certain Dream which seemed afterward fulfied; It was about the time when the *Spaniards* and *Hollanders* had a Sea fight in the *Downs*, which I hearing some talk of, it filled me with fears, and the following night I dreamed that I saw fire rained, or rather powred down round about, and looking where I was, I thought my self to be without the Coach yard Gate of my Fathers house; I was much affrighted to see nothing but fire on every side of me, and looking upward and about me, praying earnestly

earneſtly for Deliverance, none came nigh me by a good ſpace, though flaming in all places elſe, ſo that I could ſee none exempted; wherefore being afflicted for my Father and our Family, I fell on my knees, to ask mercy for them, and continued praying a long while before I could be heard; but at laſt, I thought I was bid to ariſe and look, and then the Fire ſeemed not to fall ſo faſt on my Fathers Houſe as before, but abated by little and little, till I awaked. Now though this Dream ſeized much upon my Spirits for the preſent; yet I accounted it only a fancy, till about ſix years after meeting with Dr. *Draiton* in the Iſle of *Ely*, and repeating it to him, he declared to me, that for ſeveral Reaſons which he gave, this muſt be more than a meer Dream or working of fancy, and that ſomething would happen which this did preſignifie, inſtancing in ſome of the like kind which himſelf, his Wife, and others had met with, as warnings and predictions; and therefore he wiſhed me by no means to ſlight or contemn it, becauſe he was confident it did preſage ſome fiery and angry Diſpenſation upon our Family, and that my Father and the reſt, would fall under ſome trouble by the times or otherwiſe, and my ſelf ſhould be free, and at liberty to pray for them; and that by degrees, they ſhould be brought out, and the Fire abated; this interpretation which he gave more fully, was for the moſt part verified ſome years after.

But all this while I was labouring for Heaven, in an exceeding formal way, and did much covet to know the things of God, and therefore often wiſht that I were a Miniſter, ſuch a one as Mr. *Fenner*, Mr. *Marſhall*, Mr. *Hooker*, my Father, or ſome other Eminent Preacher, that ſo I might attain to their Knowledge, and then I thought I ſhould do

more abundant Service for God (as if the Lord were beholding to me for my obedience) and should the more easily and surely obtain Salvation; thus I poor Creature continued for several years together, keeping many fast Days by my self, Heard, Read, Sung Psalms, Meditated, used Soliloquies, and prayed many times a day, and what not, and yet at last sunk into the depth of despair, what by the often thoughts of Hell, in reading Drexelius upon Eternity, and then thinking of the Endless, Easeless, and Remedileſs Torments of the Damned; what by frequent Frights as before; and what by my Father once preaching on the Parallel of the Fool in the Gospel, Luke 10. 20. *Thou Fool, this Night will I take away thy Soul, then whose shall these things be that thou hast provided.* From whence he discovered the unaccountable folly of Men, to lay up the Trifles of this World, and forget Heaven. That Eternal Happiness is not to be obtained upon a Down Bed, nor without much pains and care, since our Blessed Lord tells us, that *many strive* hard *to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, and shall not be able*, and that, *Except our Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Matth.* 5. 20. what with these and other things, I was almost thrown into the bottomless abyss of Desperation; I took the Bible to look these Scriptures, and read them over, and over again, but the more I read, the more I was filled with Horror, and roared for Grief, being sunk so deep into the black gulf of Despair, that to my self and others, I seemed past recovery; I Prayed, Fasted, Mourned, got into corners, yea many times, being ashamed my case should be openly known, I run into Barns, Stables, Out-Houses, any where, pretending I had business, on purpose

purpoſe to Pray, Sigh, Weep, ſtriking my Breaſt, and curſing the hour that I was born; wiſhing that I were a Stone, any thing but what I was, for fear of Hell and the Devils, whom I thought I often ſaw in ſeveral ugly ſhapes and forms; ſometimes fancying them to have great rolling Eyes like Sawcers, with Sparkling Firebrands in one hand, and with the other reaching at me, to tear meaway to Torments: Oh! the leaps that I have made, the frights that I have had, the fears that I was in, which continued off and on many years.

To theſe inward Tortures, I had the addition of many ſore outward Afflictions, which much heightned my Sorrows, being often (doubtleſs I might deſerve it too to much) beaten, bruiſed, turned out of Doors, kickt about, and moſt ſeverely and unkindly uſed. At which times I ſhould be Tempted to Murther my ſelf; and ſometimes to think I could not belong to God; for if I did, he would not endure to ſee me thus uſed and Afflicted, who did always fly to him, and prayed, and prayed, and prayed, but I had as good ſpeak to a poſt, for I was not Relieved; other times I ſhould read and weep, and (as my uſual manner was, in the time of my great Deſpair) would fall flat all along, with my face on the ground, and cry, and ſigh and weep, and call for help, but the Lord's time was not yet come to anſwer; I often wept half, and ſometimes a whole Night together, watering my Bed with my Tears, for fear of Hell and the Devil, becauſe of my Sins, and Rebellious Diſobedience; I always Slept with my Hands claſped together, that ſo if I ſhould dye, or that the Devils ſhould prey upon me, I might be found in a praying poſture, ſleeping as well as waking; and for five or ſix years together, I never durſt go to ſleep in any other manner.

But the greateſt blow I met with, was from the Scripture afore mentioned, *Mattth.* 5. 20. Surely thought I, it is but in vain to ſtrive againſt the Stream, if I muſt exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees; for I had often read of their ſtrictneſs in their Houſes, Synagogues, and Schools; that the moſt ordinary among them, repaired three or four times a day to their Devotions, namely in the Morning, at Sunriſing, at the fourth hour of the Day, in the Afternoon, and in the Evening, and ſo in a manner, were all day long in Devotion; beſides Laudatory Prayers and Thanks, not only for all the Mercies they daily receive, but upon every extraordinary occaſion, and in every action; a prayer for every time they eat, they would not drink without a prayer; a prayer for every good ſmell; a prayer when they waſh, *&c.* a prayer upon every new thing they had, and what not? Inſomuch that ſome of their Rabbies Write, they uſed at leaſt an Hundred and eight Prayers or Benedictions every day; I had likewiſe read, how ſtrict they were on their Sabbaths, they would not gather wood, not kill a flie or flea, not dreſs any Proviſions, not make a Fire, not Write, nor cancel any Writing, not quench a Fire, not handle nor touch any Money, hammer, Tool, or other Inſtrument, not bear any weight or burden, not eat of any thing dreſſed, nor any Fruits gathered on that Day, not wear any thing that day, but juſt neceſſary Apparel, not ſpeak of Worldly matters, as Buying, Selling, Giving, Taking, nor make any Bargains; Nay, on the Friday before Sunſet, all Worldly things were laid aſide, and they began their Sabbath.

Now theſe and the like conſiderations, made me think it was in vain to ſeek to be ſaved, and to no more purpoſe than to beat the Wind, or Build

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in the Air; for if the Scriptures were true, I could never attain thereunto, ſince I judged it impoſſible for me to exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees; ſo that after ſerious deliberate Debates in my own Soul about my lamentable condition, I lay under the ſevereſt ſenſe and ſentence of this Scripture, which at length heightned and increaſed my diſpair to ſuch a degree that I could take no comfort; and I was ſo wretched as to account the God of Mercy moſt cruel, in exacting impoſſibilities of Men, by requiring them to exceed ſuch Righteouſneſs, and to let ſo many be Damned, becauſe they could not go beyond it; Oh! ſuch hard thoughts had I of God; At length I was Tempted not to Pray, Read, Hear, or do any Duties at all; for I thought it impoſſible after all to be Saved, and ſo would deny all; ſometimes I was Tempted to think there was no God, but that all things came by Nature; yea, ſo wicked was I, as to challenge God, if thare were a God, to give me ſome ſign, or certain proof thereof. In a word, my troubled Thoughts roſe to ſuch a height, that I did not only Deſpair, but began to be Diſtracted, and out of my Wits; ſometimes I thought Trees to be good and bad Angels, and looked upon Buſhes as Dens of Devils; I ſat up whole Nights in a little Turrit in the Orchard, Studying, Singing, Whiſtling, Hallowing, and drawing Figures, or elſe walking in the Fields, or other Solitary places, talking to my ſelf, ſpeaking to Trees as to Men, or as to Angels, or God; and thinking the leaſt whiſtling of the Wind, or chirping of a Bird, or lowing of a Beaſt, to be ſome anſwer ſent to me: As theſe Diſtractions increaſed, I could not avoid the forcible Temptations of a Furious Devil, making me ſometimes whet a Knife, take a Billet, or ſome other thing to Murther my-

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ſelf or others, or indeed all, for my thoughts I would have all to have gone my way; many ways I tryed to do miſchief, but was always prevented, till at laſt I was taken and bound hand and foot, and held faſt in my Bed, while the raging Fits were over; and then when I was tyred and patient yet if let go, without a watchful Eye, the firſt thing I went about would be, without ſpeaking a word, to ſeek for a Knife, or to get to the Window, to caſt my ſelf down Headlong; ſo that I was often ſtrangely and almoſt miraculouſly preſerved even in the very Act and inſtant of time, when a few Minutes longer had been too late to ſave my Life.

I ſhould not be ſo long in this Hiſtory, but that I dare hide nothing wherein God hath appeared my God for his own Glory, in what I am now by Grace; and therefore as things Eminent are brought to Memory, I am bold to declare them, for the Magnifying of the alone love, and Riches of God's Mercy in Jeſus Chriſt. I dare boldly ſay, few that ſaw me in thoſe headlong diſtempers, did think me at the beſt, fit for any place but Bedlam, or did believe I ſhould ever be reſtored to what I am, and this was alſo very ſtrangely. For as my diſtracted Fits abated, they then turned more to inward Malady and Malancholy, ſo that I continually cryed out, I am Damn'd, I am Damn'd, I am ſure I cannot be ſaved, it is impoſſible, Oh I have Hell, Hell Fire about me, the Devils are tearing me, and I thought I heard the Damned roaring and raving, and ſaw them, was it were, Roaſting and Frying in everlaſting Torments, and my whole Soul was ſwallowed up with their Howlings, and Screechings. In this Deplorable condition, I lay ſeveral days and nights, untill at length I was fully perſwaded and convinced, that there

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was a God, that this God was Righteous, and that he would hear my Prayers, if I continued calling upon him, and crying to him with Importunity without ceasing; seeing the unjust Judge that we read of in Scripture, was prevailed upon by the Importunities of the poor Widdow;

Hereupon having gathered together those scattered Relicks of Reason that were left me, I took up a Resolution, that I would continue in Prayer, and so I did, though by fits I was froward, and mute, and mild, and I know not how, sometimes scarce eating a bit of Bread in five days together; after which I was in another form and frame of Spirit, (though by turns, full of Distraction and Desperate thoughts) I grew more Serious, and began to weigh things, as in a Ballance, and to Expostulate with the Lord, and to Pray by fits most furiously, and now and then the Tears which were before dryed up, began to Trickle and Rowl down my Face, like swollen drops of Blood:

Thus I continued three or four days, till one Afternoon coming into the Chamber, my Heart being as big and full as it could hold, I threw my self flat on my face as usually, striking on the Boards, and crying to the Lord for Deliverance, and using such extravagant Expressions as might discover that I was in Despair; then standing up, I walked a turn or two saying, is there not a God? Is he Gracious? Are the Scriptures false? 'Canst thou 'take delight to see a poor Soul thus set on the 'Rack, Sighing and Roaring in Torment? Rise up 'and appear for thy self, thou Great God, shew 'thy self Gracious in one Act of Mercy, in des-'pight of all the Devils in Hell; Then beating my Breast, and tearing my Hair, I threw my self on the Bed, whilst my Eyes were glazed, and brim full with Tears; There I lay till a suddain sleep

seized upon me, and I dreamed of the same Scripture that had been a killing Letter to me, which now through the Spirit of Christ quickned me, whereby I was made sensible that Christs Righteousness being by Faith, made mine, did exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, and that except I, in and by the Righteousness of Christ made mine, did excell their Righteousness, I could not be Saved. When I awaked, I was so much changed, that I was amazed at my self, at the suddenness of it; for I dreamt I was comforted, and that my Heart was filled with Joy, and when I awaked, it was so indeed; I started up, and rebuked my self saying, why am not I damned? VVhat's the matter? VVhy am I so filled with a fancy, and with a suddain hope of I know not what, nor whence; I then fell to pray, and whilst I was praying, I said, Lord is this true? Say Lord is it true? If it be so, discover it to me, confirm me in it; at length I was perswaded that the Righteousness of Christ was mine, that this Garment was provided for such poor, naked, torn Creatures as I was; whereupon I took the Bible, and found several Scriptures which seemed to confirm the same to me, and I was fflled with Divine infusions, and immediate Resolutions agreeable to the will of God given out there; and then I began to breath upon it, and pause a little, and by degrees to revive and look up with some hope, till the Lord satisfied me by revealing to my Heart, that Christ's Righteousness was my only Justification, and that therein I did exceed all Pharisaical Righteousness; whereby I had comfortable hopes of Salvation, in and through Jesus Christ, from that very same Scripture, which did before condemn me.

After this I began plainly to perceive, why my

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my self and so many others were so long and lamentably lost in Despair, that it was because we sought for Justification in a wrong place, and were therefore in the wrong way to Salvation; just as if a Man should dig in his Garden for a Mine of Gold; no wonder that we lose our labour at last, after Sweating, Tears, Prayers, Cares, Pains, Fears and all, seeing we look in a wrong place. Thus was it with me, all the while I was looking and poaring, and perplexing my self for a Righteousness of my own, and to seek in my self to exceed the Scribes and Pharisees, Alas! I was lost, undone, and could not find it, nor see any door of Hope set open for my Soul, till Christ in his Righteousness was Revealed in me; and then I knew him to be a Saviour. Well, with this Joy I have continued to this Hour, holding and keeping my ground against all Temptations, with great numbers of which I have been Assaulted ever since, and such as have been scarce heard of. For after I had Solemnized, and Celebrated my New Life (begun in anothers Righteousness, and another self) by composing and singing of Psalms, Hymns, Spiritual Songs, and continual open-hearted returns of Praises to my self, whilst the Angels seemed to rejoyce with me; yet Satan my constant and unwearied Enemy, began now to muster up afresh more troubles against me, and to follow me with an Host of Afflictions and Tryals, as *Pharaoh* followed *Israel*, with a purpose to destroy them, when once out of his Territories; but my God whom I unfeignedly serve from my Soul, did deliver me, does deliver me, and I trust will deliver me, as the Apostle says, 1 *Cor.* 1.

For though Satan laid many Snares, and so beset me about, that it seemed scarce possible I should escape; yet the Lord set me at liberty from the

Snares of the Fowler, though sometimes so subtilly planted, that I could not discern them; and what he could not do by Insinuations and Subtilties, and with inward Motions and Temptations, he tryed to compass by Violence, in Tormenting me, and making me a miserable Object of Affliction and Sorrow. For now my Friends became mine Enemies, and my preciseness was an eyesore to many. My near Relations cast me off, and I was lookt upon as disobedient, for keeping company with such Godly Men, as were then called Puritans and Roundheads, and for Praying and holding Communion with them, though commanded to the contrary; at length I found so little love from some, and so much malice from others, that I was turn'd out of Doors, and was forc't to seek my Fortune, as they say, and to fly with my own Feathers, having not above three Shillings in my Pocket, to Travel up and down with in strange Countries in the midst of VVinter, so that I was often up to the knees in Snow, whilst the very Isicles hung on my Hair and Cheeks, which a shower of Tears would sometimes thaw, falling abundantly from me in the open Fields and High-ways, where none but God was witness of them. I many times used to beg at poor Houses and Cottages, that I might come in to warm and dry me, or for a draught of small Beer, which would make some poor Souls fall a weeping to see me. After many dangers and troubles, I footed it as far as *Cambridge*, where I sought from one Colledge to another, to be but a Sizer or poor Scholler, my little stock of Money being all gone; but the Servitors of Kings-Colledge, of which I was one before, being dismissed, I could get no place, and I had no Money and wanted Bread, insomuch that I was forced for Life to try all things, and to eat Leather old quil[s]

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and pens, which I pickt up out of the dust and dunghils, and roasted in a few Coals, which were left in the Chamber where I was; yea, at length I tryed to eat Grass, and did it, and my Drink was only fair water; nay, I grew to that height of Penury and Famine, that I tryed to eat my own Fingers, biting them till I could endure it no longer; then tearing my Hair, and crying, I had recourse to Prayer, whereby my Passion would sometimes be allayed for the present.

This continued so long, that I met with Temptations in this Wilderness, to try to turn Stones into Bread; the Devil often Tempted me to study Necromancy, Magick, Conjuration or the Black Art, as it is called, and to make a League with him, and then I should never want, but have Bags of Gold and Silver, and be owned by my Friends, and Honoured of all Men, and return home with great Respect and Riches; yet the Lord would not suffer me to hearken to him, but to Resist and tell him; 'Thou art a Lyar from the beginning, away 'thou Malicious Accuser of the Brethren, Tempt 'me not, for thou didst do thus to my Blessed 'Lord and Master Jesus Christ; but he overcame 'thee, and so I trust shall I by his Strength and 'Power; Then I Prayed and Read the Scriptures, and Writ Holy Meditations, and Soul Soliloquies on the 88 Psalm, with several other Divine Contemplations upon *Dives* and *Lazarus*, *&c.* all in Verse, very Pathetical and Tragical, suitable to my condition under several Temptations; so that in stead of Astrological and Magical Studies, I bent my mind to Sacred Meditations, Soul comforting, Angelical and Evangelical Contemplations; yet I continued under strong Temptations, but to the praise of God I speak it, I think I was never a more growing Christian, then after Satan had these Repulses.

But

But I must not omit to declare, that I had one dreadful Temptation first, which was almost irrecoverable, had I not been prevented wonderfully, even as I was upon the Execution thereof. For finding my self almost starved to Death, my strength near gone, my Eyes sunk deep in my Head, and my Face wearing Deaths Colours, I was almost at my wits end. I confess when I felt a violent Passion or Fit coming upon me, I would fall to Prayer, Reading, or the like, whereby sometimes they were past by, and I had much comfort; but yet I could not always avoid them; for now a terrible Temptation got ground of me, coming on audaciously, growing so strong upon me, and following me so close, that I could not escape it. I took up the Skin of my wasted Hand and Arms, with a resolution to tear it off for anger, Satan having so besotted me that I could see no way to evade Death; I had been beholden to all the Scholars that I found courteous, to bring me Scraps, Skins of salt Fish, or any other Victuals in their Handkechers or Pockets, which kept me alive a while, till at last they all grew weary, and I was almost pined to Death, and ashamed to beg publickly, and utterly blinded as to any way whereby to recover my self out of this condition; wherefore after violent and never ceasing Temptations, I drew my Knife, whetted it sharp, opened my Doublet and Shirt, and in the midst of the Room where I was alone, I kneeled down to Prayer, to surrender up my Soul into the Hands of God; my Knife lay by me ready, and I was prepared for the Act, when behold a Door which I thought bolted the Night before, yet was only shut too, was now opened by a Scholar, which with the Screeking of it made me start up, and hastily throw my Knife in the Chimney, being much ashamed of what I was going to do; in comes the

the Scholar and tells me of a place in *Huntington-Shire*, to Teach Gentlemens Children, and how one of our Colledge was ſent to, and refuſed it:

By this means I was recovered out of this imminent Danger, and after the Scholar was gone, did exceedingly reprove and check my ſelf for ſuffering this Temptation to grow ſo upon me for want of Faith, and was much afflicted at it, and the more becauſe this Mercy came in ſo ſeaſonably upon it; Oh that I could not wait upon God; at night after Prayer, I went as uſually, ſupperleſs to Bed, and then my Heart melted into abundance of Tears; firſt for the ſin that I was about to commit, and that I could not Believe, and Reſiſt the Devil, as I had done in God's ſtrength before; and then for the Love of God, and his Fatherly care appearing for me at that inſtant, when I took no care at all, but had Devoted my ſelf to Death, that at this very Moment he ſhould not only deliver me, but ſend me News full of Hopes; Oh! how did theſe things break my Heart, and work upon me moſt part of the night, untill with an Heart full, and Head full, and Eyes full and all, I fell into a deep ſleep; and was viſited with an extraordinary Token from on High, both in Dream and Viſion, which I imagine was afterward accompliſhed.

The Dream was this; that I was walking home to my Fathers Houſe, with a Staff in my Hand, and fearing I ſhould be out of the way, I lookt carefully for the path, which at firſt I could ſcarce diſcern, and began to look about and queſtion it, till at length I perceived the footſteps of ſome who had gone that way, hereupon I proceeded, and the farther I went, the plainer I found it to be a path, and that I was in the right way, ſince I could ſee no other; at which I rejoyced, and

went

went on confidently, as if I feared no Evil nor Enemy, till I came to a Fine, Glorious, Beautiful, Houſe, and Building on the left hand of me, out of which iſſued forth a Beam that reached croſs the way I was to go in, ſo that I was at a little ſtand at the firſt; yet would not ſtoop under this Beam, but ſtept aſide, and ſo paſſed away, laying my Hand thereon, as I ſtept by the ſide of it; when ſuddenly I thought the Houſe was all in a flame, at which I was ſomething troubled, paſſing on the way, and wondring in my ſelf what this ſhould be, till I was overtaken by ſome rude Malicious Men, who accuſed me for ſetting this Houſe on Fire, and would not hear me ſpeak, but were violently halling me away to Priſon, with which being ſufficiently affrighted, and my fleſh ſet a Trembling, I awaked, and was offended with my ſelf, for being ſo much concerned at a fooliſh Dream and Fancy; ſo it being yet dark, I laid me down and fell aſleep again, and waſt caſt into the ſame Dream again exactly; and at my Right Hand, I thought there was a Grave Ancient Man, full of white Hairs like Wool, and a long white Beard, who ſtood by me and ſaid, 'Chear up, fear not, 'for the Lord hath ſent me to comfort thee, and 'to tell thee that he hath choſen thee to Preach 'his Word, and the Goſpel of Chriſt, which is 'the Staff thou hadſt in thine Hand, and with 'this Staff, which is the Word of God, thou 'ſhalt walk home to thy Fathers Houſe in Heaven, 'where is fullneſs of Joy; but after a time, thou 'wilt be troubled with the different opinions and 'ways of Men, and ſeem at firſt to be at a loſs, 'yet the Lord will be thy Guide; Go on, and as 'thou goeſt forward, the way of the Lord will 'ſtill appear plainer before thine Eyes; the foot-'ſteps thou ſaweſt are the Examples of the Saints

that

'that have gone before you, which will be a great 'help to you, and you ſhall walk chearfully on in 'the way which is clear to you, and ſhall ſee no 'other; but yet you muſt meet with the fair 'Houſe on the left Hand, that is, the Glory and 'Great ones of the World, who make a great and 'fair ſhew to Men, as if built High; but they 'muſt fall, and are only on the left Hand of you, 'whilſt you will Deſpiſe and Preach againſt them, 'and turn your Eye forward, to go in the way 'of God without turning about. By the Beam 'that came out of this Houſe, is meant the Pow-'ers and Opinions of theſe, who when you ſhall 'croſs or ſtep aſide, or will not ſtoop under them, 'they are ſet on fire, and inflamed on a ſudden; 'but be not troubled, go forward, although they 'ſend after you, ſaying, you have brought this 'fire upon them, and though they falſly accuſe 'you, and ſeek to hawl you to Priſon for this fact, 'whereof you are altogether Innocent. At which I awaked again, it being about Day-break, wondring with my ſelf what it ſhould mean, and verily believing it to be more than ordinary, and being filled with confidence and comfort, I roſe up and writ it down preſently. Next day I went away towards *Huntington-Shire*, where I was accepted and entertained, and had a comfortable Maintenance for ſeveral years.

But after all theſe Deliverances, I Multiplyed abundantly in Gifts and Graces, either to Pray, Expound, Read, Sing Hymns, and Spiritual Songs with the Spirit, and Underſtanding; and as *Iſrael*, *Exod.* 1. the more he was Afflicted, he Multiplyed the more; ſo, Bleſſed be the Lord, I was the more filled with the Spirit, endued with ſtrength and grace, and refreſhed with Peace and Joy, the more I had ſuffered; ſo that all my troubles were

through

through Grace, but as *Joseph's* step, to Higher Enjoyments; and finding the Lord so abundantly to endue me from above, and to Qualifie me for the Call that I had before in the Night for the Ministry, (which I little thought or imagined could have come to pass, my Friends having often resolved on the contrary) and all things so fairly concurring, I was much confirmed, that the Lord had designed me thereunto; and not long after I was by a Godly People earnestly importuned, and at length prevailed with to Preach the Gospel, and was soon known about the Country; so although I have ever since met with several Afflictions, Oppositions, and Troubles, yet many have given Testimony to the Word I have Preached in divers places, the Lord be praised, to the great refreshing of my Soul, and toward the filling up of my Joy, when I shall give an account to their comfort at the Great Day of the Lord.

After this, I was sent forth as a Pastor and publick Teacher by the Church, and I know my Ministerial Commission and Authority to be from God; and notwithstanding the divers Temptations I still meet with, finding my Heart full of Corruption, and my Life a continual Warfare, yet I bless God (who hath delivered me in divers ways which I have not here declared, from the Fraudulent Gins and Snares of the Devil, and who hath called me out of Darkness into Light) that his power is stronger in me than any that hath been against me; and I am the better provided against Satan, because I now live by Faith in the Son of God, above the Letter in the Life, above the Form in the Power, above self in an higher self, where I have my abode, so that I am not I; but by the Grace of God it is, that I am what I am; I have Provision within, seeing Christ in me

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is the hope of Glory; and I do certainly expect Salvation in Chriſt Jeſus, my Head, my Lord, my Elder Brother, and the firſt Fruits of them that Riſe again. And although I meet with daily Tryals at Home and Abroad, within and without, yet I am all the time aſcending to Heaven, the ſame way that Chriſt my Redeemer went, *Who hath, through the Vail, Conſecrated a New and living way for me into the Holy of Holies.* I can comfortably Drink after my Saviour out of his own Cup; and in eating his Meat, and drinking his Drink, I can take Gall and Vinegar, as well as Milk and Honey, and I account the enjoyment of Chriſt, to be the enjoyment of all the Excellencies and Happineſs in Heaven and Earth; nesther do I doubt but *I* ſhall appear perfect in his Righteouſneſs, being pardoned by his Death, purged by his Blood, Sanctified by his Spirit, and *Saved* by his Power, and to be Glorified, as he is Glorified, and ſee him as he is; and whilſt I Live and Breath, I hope and Reſolve to live to him, and for him, as well as by him, and I ſhall not deſire to live one minute longer than it may be for his Honour, Glory, and Service, which I beſeech the Lord of Heaven to make me fit for, and faithful in, and to prepare my Soul for that Glory, which is to be Revealed. J. R.

II. *Experiences of* R. W.

I will declare what the Lord hath done for me; I Firſt in my Youth, my Father being a Godly Man in *Dublin* in *Ireland*, brought up his Children very Religiouſly; but for my part, though I were well Educated and Inſtructed, yet I was very Diſobedient, being young and Headſtrong, and refuſing to hearken to my Fathers Advice which he often gave me, but I regarded it not; which was afterward a veay great grief to me, for I could not endure to be curbed, nor kept in, but at length

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to avoid the continual Reproofs which he justly gave me, for my ill courses and company, I resolved not to stay at home any longer, but to go into *Flanders*; accordingly I put out to Sea, but by Storms and contrary Winds, was driven back again; yet I could not see the Hand of God in this, but still held on my purpose, and took the first opportunity to get away out of *Ireland* into *England*, where my Friends used many Arguments to perswade me to return home again. Whilst I continued in *England*, I began to be convinced, by hearing several good Men, of the heinousness of my sins, and wicked disobedience, and was thereupon sadly afflicted and disconsolate, so that I could have no quiet nor rest.

In this time my Father hearing where I was, (not knowing before what was become of me, doubting I might be dead or drowned) writ a Letter to me, wherein I was admonished to beware of such as run headlong to Perdition, with many other good advices, he seeming like old *Jacob*, to rejoyce that his Son was yet alive, *&c.* All these things struck me heavily to the Heart, so that I lay long under the fearful Sentence of my Iniquities and Disobedience, and could receive no comfort nor satisfaction. I concealed this my inward Grief and Torment, till my Heart was ready to burst, but at length acquainted my Friends therewith, who endeavoured to comfort me, and I had some quiet for a short space; but this lasted not, so that I soon fell again into my old malady and trouble as before., being so exceedingly disturbed that I could by no means obtain any peace, till that Scripture came into my mind, Isa. 50. 10. *He that sitteth in Darkness, and seeth no light, should trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay himself upon his God*, this did much support and incourage

courage me to depend upon God, whereby I had abundance of conſolation. Yet I was ſeldom free from many Temptations, Fears, and Doubts; and ſuch ſometimes as did much diſquiet me, untill once that I had a Divine Dream, which hath been very ſweet to my Soul ever ſince; for in my Dream I thought I was told, that God's love was free in Jeſus Chriſt, and beſtowed upon poor ſinners through his Merits, and that he put none by, neither turned any away that came to him in and through his Dear Son, and that I need not fear but I was one of them that ſhould be accepted and received to Mercy. This brought much Joy to my Heart, and the ſenſe of it remains to this very day. Afterward I went to *New-England*, and had much comfort from them, and from their Miniſters, and ſince my return, I have had great peace of Mind, and deſire to live in Union with Chriſt, and Communion with his Servants, as long as I am upon Earth; and I have grounded hopes of living with him when I dye, and with all his Saints, to enjoy his Eliſsfull preſence to Eternal Ages. R. W.

III. *Experiences of* Maj. A. M.

I was well Educated by my Parents, who were accounted Puritans, till about ſixteen years of Age, after which I was put an Apprentice to *London*, but ill company drew me away; and I took ill courſes, till I was about 24 years Old; then I came into *Ireland* in the beginning of the Rebellion 1641. and Travelling toward the North, paſſed through great Dangers, and many Deaths, as I may ſay, for there my Father was killed, my Wife wounded, and I my ſelf with much difficulty, eſcaped from the bloody Rebels; after this I was in the Fight at *Drogheda*, oa *Tredah*, when it was taken, and being laid in the Field of Battel among the Slain, I was given over for one of the Dead, but

but it pleased God that I recovered, and then went into *England*; I had not been there long, but I began to look about me, and to have some convictions of mind, and thereupon I was diligent to follow the means, and hear the VVord of God Preached by good Men, being sensible of my sins, and former forgetfulness of God, or any thing that was good; I heard one Mr. *Owen*, with whom I was much affected, and convinced of my misery in the want of Christ, and afterwards received great comfort, and assured hopes of Salvation from Mr. *R.* and now I do verily believe, I have Fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and find a wonderful change in my Soul, abhorring all ill company and courses, and desiring to walk in all well pleasing toward God; and tho' I meet with many Temptations, yet I bless the Lord he carries me on in his good ways, so that I can now pray to him by the assistance of his Spirit, and have an earnest love to his Word and Ordinances; Blessed be God for his free grace in Christ Jesus, who before I had any knowledge of him, spoke to my Heart by the means of an honest Man about thirteen years ago. After which I followed all the means I could meet with, and was wont to hear Mr. *Cradock*, and Mr. *Symson* in *London*, the first of whom in a Sermon upon *Isaiah*, *Wee is me, I am an unclean Creature, &c.* spoke so home to my condition, that I imagined his Discourse was directed to me particularly; This so wrought upon my Conscience, that I was extreamly afflicted for a time, and gave my self much to Prayer, and at length I became in love with Truth, and true Christians, and have found, and do yet find those things true in me, which were spoken by Mr. *N.* of that oneness of Love and unity of the Spirit, which ought to be among all Gods People;

ple; I have ſeen my ſad condition by Nature, and am ſenſible of the happy change that the grace of God hath made in me, and now Oh! how do I love the ways of God, and Holineſs, and Duties, and means of Grace, and the things of God which before I ſlighted, diſregarded, and loathed; and laſtly, I now deſire, and long after Jeſus Chriſt, and care not how ſoon I be taken out of this ſinful World, that I may live with him in Eternal Glory. *A. M.*

IV. *Experiences of* F. B.

MY Experiences of the Mercy and Love of God, are more than I can expreſs; the firſt main work upon my Spirit, was on a ſudden, upon an Alarm given to our Troop, while I was a Souldier, which had ſuch a convincing effect upon me, that I lay long under the Apprehenſion of Gods Wrath, and was much diſquieted; ſo that though I Prayed, and Prayed, yet I could take no comfort, and had no confidence in the Mercy of God, but Confuſion was before my Face. Afterward I came to *Dublin*, where I was impeached for breaking an Article of War, and was condemned to loſe my Life for the ſame; whilſt I was in Priſon, I had dreadful apprehenſions of Hell in my Soul, and could do nothing but weep, and mourn, and pray, counting my Life to be loſt, and yet I was more troubled for the wrath of God, then the wrath of Man; But at length it pleaſed God to give me comfort, for one Night whilſt I was bemoaning my ſelf, and in much Deſpair, on a ſudden the room was all in a flame, and I thought my ſelf in the midſt of Lightning, and being terrified, I imagined I ſaw theſe words written againſt the Wall, *Thy ſins are Pardoned, and thy Life is hid with Chriſt in God.* This extraordinary Manifeſtation, much eaſed the Trouble and Sorrow wherein I was; but yet for want

want of Faith, this comfort did not long continue with me; for after that, I thought I saw the Lord with such a wrathful countenance, that I durst not look upon him; and the next news that I heard was, that I was ordered to be shot to Death; Oh! then I cannot express the terrors that I was in; my woful misery was such, that neither Prayers, reading of the Scriptures, nor the pretious promises therein, could afford me any Relief, for I could not believe that I had any right to them, and therefore could not lay hold of them. In this dreadfull Distress I lay, a condemned Man both in Soul and Body, lamenting my wretched condition, when opening the Bible in *Joel.* 2. 13. I saw it thus written. *Turn ye to the Lord God, for he is Gracious and Merciful, slow to Anger, and of great Tenderness, and Repenteth him of the Evil.* Hereupon I pondered a while, and said, and is he such a God? Well then he is my God; and with that I gave my self up into his Hands, resolving to relie upon him, let him do what he would with me; and on this Foundation I was Setled and satisfied. A while after, it pleased the Lord to deliver me out of the danger of Death, and to set me at liberty from Prison; but notwithstanding this great Mercy, yet I must confess that I afterward found such opposition in my Heart against God, as I could not believe had been in me; I was grievously wounded for it, and could have no quiet, but went to Mr. *W.* and acquainted him with it, who told me that I had fallen from my first Works, and that I must Repent. This rent my Heart, and I had no Rest; I returned from him and applyed to Prayer, keeping that course continually, till by degrees I was recovered out of that disconsolate condition, and I praise God I have since found his favour and kindness extended toward

ward me, ſo that I am fully perſwaded he loves me, and will pardon my ſins in Jeſus Chriſt, on whoſe Merits I relie, in whoſe Righteouſneſs I reſt, and by whoſe Grace I am now ſet free to ſerve him here, and doubt not but to Reign with him hereafter. *F. B.*

V. *Experiences of* H. M.

MY Father was a Gentleman of a fair Eſtate, had many Children, eleven Sons of us; he was High Sheriff, and when he dyed, all our Family were broken, diſperſed, and in confuſion. Two of us were brought up within five Miles of *Gloceſter*, but I was placed an Apprentice in *London*, and by this means my ſorrows and troubles began to be great, at firſt from the conſideration of this ſuddain change, which continued a while, but about the 17*th* year of my Age, my former grief was turned into another kind of Trouble, namely, Sorrow for my ſins; I was for three years together, wounded with the ſenſe of my ſins and corruptions, which were many, I followed Sermons, perſuing the means, was conſtant in Duties and Doing, looking for Heaven that way. I was very preciſe in outward formalities, cenſuring all for Reprobates that wore their Hair long, and not ſhort above their Ears, or that followed the common Modes and Faſhions of thoſe days. Thus I continued Diſtracted in my Thoughts, and wounded in my Conſcience, weeping often and bitterly, and Praying earneſtly; but yet had no comfort, till I heard that ſweet Saint now in Heaven Dr. *Sibbs*, by whoſe Means and Miniſtry, I was brought to Peace and Joy in my Spirit; his ſweet Soul-melting Sermons won my Heart, and Refreſhed me much, for by him I ſaw much of the goodneſs of God, and had good Hope and Confidence in Chriſt Jeſus, and could overlook the World, undervalue all Earthly things,

and

and was not afraid of Afflictions, and though I was sometimes under the Spirit of Bondage again unto fear, yet my Heart still held firm, and my desires were all Heaven-ward; I took delight to hear Funeral Sermons, but Dr. *Sibbs* chiefly, by whom I was effectually wrought upon, and Satisfied with Comforts, which I hope will never leave me, till I come to Everlasting Rest. *H. M.*

VI. *Experiences of Mr.* T. H. *Minister of the Gospel.*

I was but young when I first came under Convictions of Soul; and my Heart being warmed by a zealous Ministry, which put me much upon Duty, I used to read the Scriptures every Night, and to Repeat Sermons often, and so I spent the first Scene of my Youth, till I was sent by my Friends to *London*, where I lived a year or two; during that time, as often as I saw any Minister I could not but weep, and always wisht that I might be one my self, to be able to Preach too; after this I was sent to one of the Universities in *England*, but being wild with youthful company, was removed to the Colledge of *Dublin*, where I continued till the horrid Popish Rebellion broke out, in 1641. At which time I left it, and went to *Liverpool* in *Lancashire*, where I Preached some years; yet all this while I was but formal, and as the young Man in the Gospel said, he had kept all these things from his Youth; so I was from from my youth Religious, well given, loving the means, and following them, hearing Sermons, and seeking to serve God. But alas! I was yet all this while in Darkness, and did not know it; but afterwards I saw that I was blind and carnal: For I began to be in great Doubts and Troubles, and very much clouded in my Spirit, and was exceedingly tyed and bound up for a time,

time, under the Senſe of my formal Holineſs and ſins, but the Lord was pleaſed to give me light. Once as I was walking ſadly alone upon the Mountains, it pleaſed the Lord ſo to influence me by his Spirit, which ſeemed to be immediately poured out upon me, that my Soul was ſatisfied in Jeſus Chriſt, and my Heart was filled with Heavenly Joy and Peace, and with moſt Raviſhing contemplations; which continued without a cloud for ſeveral weeks together, and gave me aſſured Hopes of the Love of God; and ever ſince I have lived in the Righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and though I have met with many ſtorms and clouds, yet they have all paſſed away, and cannot hinder me from Salvation, ſo long as Chriſt who is my Lord and Saviour, is above them; and I doubt not but he will at laſt Tranſlate me from his Kingdom of Grace here, to his Kingdom of Glory hereafter.

VII. *Experiences of Capt.* J. S.

WHen I was carnal & ignorant, I did very much ſlight the Miniſters of Chriſt, eſpecially your long Preachers, and could not abide that any ſhould make long Sermons; but at laſt I was taken by one Preached out of *Hebrews* 8.8. *Behold the days come ſaith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the Houſe of* Iſrael, *and with the Houſe of* Judah. This New Covenant made in Chriſt, was applyed very home to my Soul, and touched me to the Heart, cauſing me to enquire into my condition; hearing that the danger of being out of this Covenant, was as great as it was of old, to have been out of *Noahs Ark*; and I began to commune with my own Heart, and to enquire whether I were under this New Covenant or no; but alas I could find no Satisfaction, and lay long under great Affliction and Trouble, ſo that I knew not

what to do, being under many Temptations; ſometimes I would hear, and was affected with the Ordinances, and at other times not; and ſo I continued a while, until I was comforted by reading theſe and ſome other ſuitable Promiſes, Hoſea 14. 4. *I will heal their Backſlidings, and love them freely, for mine Anger is turned away from them,* and Heb. 8. 12. *For I will be Merciful to their Unrighteouſneſs, and their Sins and Iniqnities will I remember no more.* And Rom. 5. 6, 8. *In due time Chriſt dyed for the Ungodly, while we were yet ſinners,* &c. But yet I queſtioned whether he dyed for me or no; and it was anſwered, yes for me, for I was one of the number of ſinners, and ungodly that needed Chriſt; bnt being in fears, I went and told Mr. *Bridges* how I was, who indeed ſatisfied me very much for the time; Yet after this I fell into much Trouble, and had a Sentence of Death within me, and thought I was Damned, and utterly loſt for all this, ſtill wanting Faith, and reſting and relying upon my own actings and graces, till the Lord brought theſe ſayings of *Paul* to *Corinth* cloſe home to my Heart, *Covet tne beſt things, and I tell you yet a more excelleat way.* And I thought there was yet a better way than I had met with, for which I was troubled a great while; But at length I had ſome ſweet Diſcoveries of Jeſus Chriſt, and then I perceived the moſt excellent way, which is nothing but Chriſt, and an intereſt in him; whereupon I grew to be full of courage and peace, loving Chriſt above all, and in all, who is now all in all to my Soul, and I queſtion not but he will be my Portion and Inheritance to all Eternity. *T. H.*

VIII. *Experiences of* J. C.

UPon a Lords Day at Night, I being earneſtly Praying to be confirmed in Faith, & in the right ways

ways of God; After Prayer I went to ſleep, and about five in the Morning, I had the following Dream, and preſently upon my waking, I made haſt to write it down, leſt I ſhould forget any part thereof, it ſeeming very ſtrange to me, and I believing there was ſomething extraordinary therein. My Dream was to this purpoſe.

I thought I was in the Company of Mr. *R.* the Miniſter, Coll. *H.* and my Lord *C.* and that we were all going together upon a fine green way, in which we Travelled a long time; and then Mr. *R.* turns back to us and ſaid; 'Brethren you may 'ſee what a great comfort it is to walk in the 'Paths of Righteouſneſs; for though we have Tra-'velled ſo long, yet we are not at all weary, 'And Brethren, be aſſured that I will lead you to 'a place of great Joy and Comfort before it be 'long, if you will but follow me; Then I Dreamt we went a little further, till we came to a very long and ſpacious place, wherein there was a great Gate, and there Mr. *R.* made a Prayer, and as ſoon as he had concluded, the Gate was opened, and being entred, we went into a great Garden, where was a large pair of Stairs, and going up we ſaw a great many dead Mens Bones, which appeared to Mr. *R.* in full and perfect ſhapes of Men as ever any were, as I conceive, for at thoſe Bones he made a ſtand, and ſaid unto us; 'Look Brethren, and 'take good notice of the Handy-work of our 'Great God; For here you may ſee that they are 'in as perfect ſhapes, as they were in the lower 'World. We then proceeded further, and Mr. *R.* made another ſtand, and ſaid unto us: 'Brethren, now I ſhall ſee whether you are ſtrong in Faith or no; So we came to a place where we muſt needs go over, which appeared to be like a deep Pit, and a ſmall Pike ſeemed to be laid over,

it, and Mr. *R.* said; 'Come Brethren, our Journey is in vain, unless we go over this Pike, for 'they that will see the Habitation of the Lord, 'must go through many Dangers, and I, by the 'Grace of God will be your Leader. He then went over with as much Safety and Ease, as if he had walked on the Earth; Next Coll. *H.* went over with much ease also, and after him my Lord *C.* It came next to my Turn, but seeing so dreadfull a downfall, and the Pike to bend and shake so much, I was extreamly afraid, and durst not set a foot upon it, whereupon Mr. *R.* cryed out to me, *O Friend, Friend, you have walkt in the Paths of Unrighteousness*! He then made a Prayer to Almighty God, that he would permit me to go over, and afterward bowed three or four times, and cryed out with a loud Voice: 'Oh thou Great 'God, how much am I bound unto thee, for thy 'Loves and Manifestations towards me; So taking me by the Hand, he bid me come over and not fear, and then I walked over with as much Safety as the rest; we then went a little further, and came to a very fair Room, and I could not see any one in it, but I conceive that Mr. *R.* and the other two saw, and spake with God, for after they had done speaking, they gave many Bows and Thanks; And then Mr. *R.* said; 'Come we 'will sing praises unto the Lord, for all his Pro-'mises and great Gifts to us; Hereupon I Dreamt, we began to sing, and I heard a Multitude of Voices, with rare Musick; yet could see none but our selves. When Mr. *R.* had done giving God his Glory, in singing his Praises, he rose up and Saluted us, saying, 'Well Brethren, I have but 'a short time to stay here with you: and whilst 'I have been amongst you, I have endeavoured 'to bring you to the right way to Worship God,

'and

'and for the time I continue with you, I shall by 'the help of God, make known unto you greater 'things then I have done yet, so I desire you to 'follow my Counsel, and it shall be for your own 'profit and advantage.

Then I waked, or else might have known more; This Dream had such an effect and influence upon me, that I could not rest till I had declared it; and now I find my Heart ever since taken off from Sin, and the Lusts of the World, and have experienced so great a change in being called home to God, as I am not able to express it in words; and am now desirous to please God, and to walk in his ways, having been long before wrought upon by the Word Preached, and by Prayer; and now have given my self up to God, in whose Mercy alone, through the Merits of Jesus Christ, I expect Joy and Peace here, and Eternal Happiness hereafter. *J. C.*

IX. *Experiences of Mr.* J. B. *Preacher of the Gospel.*

AS to my Life, and Experiences, I must declare; That when I was but a little one, God began to work upon me; for going to School, I once happened to Swear an Oath, as I was playing with my Companions, which I had no sooner uttered, but I was instantly struck with horror for it, and the sence thereof was so terrible, that I doubted I should be presently thrown into Hell for it: In which Fear and great trouble, I left my School Fellows playing; the Sorrow and Misery I thought I was in, would not permit me to stay any longer; Away I went into the Church Porch not far off, and sitting down alone, for some time wept bitterly to my self; But at length, I know not how, I began to have some hopes of Pardon, and thereupon grew chearful and fearless, till a while

after, I went to ſee ſome Malefactors Executed; For after I came home, the ſight of their Deaths ran ſo much in my Mind, and appeared ſo continually before my Eyes, that my ſins, and the horrors of Hell came freſh upon me again, ſo that I was exceedingly caſt down, and cryed out: *Oh! What ſhall I do? How ſhall I be Saved?* Which I had often in my mouth, and in the hearing of my Friends; In this condition I could take no comfort from them, till the Lord himſelf brought me out of it, and inclined me to give up my ſelf to Jeſus Chriſt, by the Life of Faith which I now live; Notwithſtanding which, I was under ſeveral Temptations, and oftentimes they came very thick upon me; but even then I reſolved, that if I were thrown into Hell, yet I would ſtill lay hold upon my Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, and would never let him go; and upon his Merits and Satisfaction, I have been Eſtabliſhed through his Grace ever ſince; So that I take Chriſt for my King, Prieſt and Prophet, and do believe him to be a Propitiation for my ſins, and my Portion and Inheritance both here and for ever. *J. B.*

Experiences of VV. VV.

I have much reaſon to acknowledge a great work of God upon my Heart, in delivering me wonderfully from ſeveral deſtroying ſins, which once I thought ſlight, but were really ſo great, that I can ſcarce expreſs them; I was very Extravagant, and brought very low both in Body and Mind, and extreamly ſenſible of Diſobeying my Parents from what the Scripture ſays of Men in the latter times, that they ſhall be *Lovers of themſelves, Heady, Diſobedient to their Parents, &c.* The Serious conſideration hereof caſt me down, afflicted my Conſcience, and ſo troubled me, that I was altogether comfortleſs; Thus I continued a long time, till

it

it pleaſed God that once in a Sermon I heard Jeſus Chriſt freely offered even to the worſt of ſinners, and then I began to look up a little with hopes of comfort, and applied theſe offers to my own Soul, being ſenſible that I had real need of them; and ſo at length I began to be ſatisfied with peace and reſt, and followed the hearing of the Word, and rejoyced in it, and loved the company of good People. And yet for all this I was under much temptation, and too much inclined to drinking, till my Brother *Strong* reproved me, ſaying, Brother, I hear ſtrange things of you, that you are given to drinking; This ſo ſmote me, together with the abuſes I received from the prophane ſort, who cryed out after me, *O this is one of* Fowler's *followers!* that I was wounded in my ſpirit a long time, to think that I ſhould bring ſuch a ſcandal upon the Goſpel; For two months I was wofully tormented in my mind, till the Lord recovered me, and gave me reſolution and power againſt this and all other ſins, which hath continued with me ever ſince, and for which I acknowledge his great love and mercy to me, and do live upon Chriſt the true *Meſſiah*, whom I believe to have died for my ſins, and that he will ſave my Soul.

W. W.

X. *Experiences of* M. K.

WHen I take a view of my Life upon the Stage of this World, I may very well compare it to a Trage-Comedy, a Labyrinth from one ſin to another, from one affliction to another. I was indeed the Daughter of very good and honeſt Parents, who diligently brought up their Children in the fear of God. My Mother, who in her days was noted for a godly, virtuous and religious Gentlewoman; ſhe, I ſay, from amongſt twelve Children, choſe me to ſet her love and affection upon, ſhe

told me, it was becauſe ſhe ſaw ſomething a more tractableneſs and and diligence to pleaſe her than in the reſt, which when I perceived, as then not being ſeven years old, I laid my ſelf forth the more to give her content, who took great delight to inſtruct me, to hear me read, and ask her queſtions. She allotted me a portion of Scripture every day, as likewiſe a part of *Eraſmus Rotterdamus* upon the four Evangeliſts, wherein we both took great delight.

About that time I had ſerious thoughts concerning God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, who putting this part of Scripture into my mind, *He that is aſhamed of me before men, of him will I be aſhamed before my Father which is in Heaven; and whoſo denieth me before men, him will I deny before the Angels which are in Heaven*: I then began to examine my ſelf on this manner, 'What wouldſt thou 'do, if thou wert tempted, amongſt diverſities 'of Opinions, to be aſhamed of this Profeſſion 'wherein thy Parents nurtured thee? What 'wouldſt thou do, if thou ſhouldſt be tempted to 'deny Chriſt, and be called to ſuffer for his ſake, 'as ſome of thy kindred were in *Queen Maries* 'time? wouldſt thou not deny thy Maſter? wouldſt 'thou not run away from thy colours?' I reſolved, that I would not: And if the Lord would be pleaſed to try me, he ſhould ſee how valiantly I would fight under his Banner, and what a faithful Souldier I would be; to this I did implore his help continually; whatſoever I was about, ſtill my heart was praying, and I deſired that God would be pleaſed to awake me in the night, that I might riſe out of my Bed to prayer, which many times I did.

After this manner I ſpent my days, until I was twelve years old, at which time it pleaſed God to take

take my Mother from me, which was some sorrow to me, but being suddenly made my Father's house-keeper, so as it were a Mother to ten Children, a Mistress over six Servants, none to do any thing without my command or consent, being as it were my Father's right hand, from whom I had this Authority; it did not only stop my sorrow, but caused an exceeding joyful pride, or proud joy to seize upon my heart, seeing my self as it were advanced, being respected amongst the chiefest of the Parish, who were my Mother's companions, I representing her person when I was amongst them; then began the cares of the World, and the deceivableness of vanities to seize upon my heart, and made me forget my former order, promises, and intentions; and thus I spent almost seven years, cumbred about many things, but quite neglecting that one thing which is needful.

About this time, it pleased God to take my Father from me, upon a sudden. I asked my heart, 'What was the cause of my Father's death? It 'made answer thus, Because thou hast sinned 'against God, thou hast not only omitted much 'good, but thou hast committed much evil, thou 'hast spent thy time idly, and loosely, and for thy 'sake all thy Brothers and Sisters are now made Fa-'therless and Motherless. This consideration made such a deep impression upon my spirit, that I refused all comfort for half a year, crying out continually, *My sins, my sins, woe is me, my sins!* being demanded by divers godly friends, and reverend Divines, what those sins were which so much troubled me? I told them, *sins of omission, sins of omission*; they would perswade me that I was young, and that I had not years enough over my head to be guilty of so many sins by omission, that needed so much sorrow, I told them that I was

old enough to offend God, and to provoke him to anger; indeed, I could not give ſo ready account of my ſins, of evil committed, and of good omitted; but though they never took notice of my ſins, yet my heart was witneſs againſt me: Thus I wearied all my Friends with my exceſſive ſorrow, who knew not what to do for me more than they had done. With one conſent they ſent me up to *London*, perſwading me that the Word of God was more plentifully Preached there, which made me willing to come. But miſſing of my Brother, to whom I was ſent, to be provided for, and reſolving to wait upon ſome Gentlewoman until I could with conveniency return down again, God by his providence brought me to the Wife of Dr. *Page*, Miniſter of *Debtford*, from whom I received great comfort, but in a ſhort time God took him from us all, whoſe death was greatly lamented. I found much favour and love from all that knew me, and moſt eſpecially from Mris. *Page*, who for three years and an half, would not ſuffer me to be away from her one day.

At the end of which time I was married to her eldeſt Son then living; we had not been long married, and my Husband received his Portion, but we took a houſe in *Weſtminſter*, intending to take ſome honeſt courſe for a livelihood, but there, God knows, we fell acquainted with ſome company which did not only cauſe much time to be ſpent in idleneſs, but almoſt all our means. One man eſpecially who gave his mind to drinking, and other vices more than any good, he, I ſay, was never well contented without my Husband's company. Seeing imminent danger to hang over our heads by reaſon of this courſe of life, I greatly deſired my Husband to refrain that man's company, or at leaſt not to ſuffer him to come ſo often home

to

to our houſe; This I begged upon my knees with tears, but could not prevail; then did the Devil ſet his foot into my heart, and perſwade me that by the committing of one ſin, I ſhould prevent many, and ſo ſtirred me up to murther him, to which ſuggeſtion *I* cowardly yielded, and ſought all opportunities to perform this wicked act. Here *I* denied my Maſter Chriſt. *I*n the higheſt of this hatred, in my ſleep, *I* thought *I* was in a very large Chamber, ſitting behind a Table covered with a green Carpet, upon which lay all manner of *I*nſtruments which proclaim death; ſuddenly the man came into the Chamber, whom, ſo ſoon as *I* eſpyed to be alone, catching up a weapon in my hand, *I* reſolved there to commit the horrid act of murther upon his body; but God, who watcheth over his, whether they ſleep or wake, and worketh by means, and without means, which way he pleaſeth, at that time put an end to all my revengeful thoughts, and cauſed me to hear a voice in my Ear, ſaying, *Vengeance is mine*; to which voice *I* anſwered aloud, *And, thou wilt repay, O Lord*; Then waking, hearing my ſelf ſpeak, *I* was in very good charity with him, and left my wrong to God, but reflecting upon mine own heart, there *I* found not only theſe, but a whole neſt of moſt Diabolical and wicked intentions, which my God was pleaſed by his preventing graces to ſmother in their birth, for *I* no ſooner had concluded, that *I* would fulfil mine own hearts luſt, although *I* ſuffered all the puniſhments due for ſuch and ſuch like ſins; wherein *I* ran away from my Captain, yet for all this he had a favour towards me, and ſent an Herauld after me to bring me back again.

But then began a freſh Batte', for my God coming as it were, to ſee what uſe *I* had made of the Talent that he had given me, he found it, not only wrapt

up

up in a napkin, but exceedingly abuſed; and ſearching my heart, what found he there, but a ſink of ſin, a Cage of unclean Birds, and Den of Theeves, a place for Dragons, for the Scritchowl, and for the Satyre? theſe had taken full poſſeſſion, there was no room for my God, they kept him out, and what did they there, but made it like a troubled Sea? Firſt, telling me my ſins were greater than could be forgiven. 'Doſt thou not know (ſaid 'they) that thy thought ſins are ſufficient to 'damn thee, although thou haſt never committed 'any actually? doth not the Scripture ſay plainly, 'if a Man luſt after a Woman he hath committed 'Adultery? which commandment being broken, brings death. I then took a view of all the ten Commandments written in the Moral Law, to ſee which of them I had broken, and which I had kept, I found them all broken, and at the end of every one was written *Death*: And not only theſe, but thoſe ſweet commands of my Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, wherein he bids us watch, and pray for your enemies, feed the hungry, cloath the naked, love one another, all which I had likewiſe broken, which made me to ſee nothing to remain for me but death and damnation. I argued then with my ſelf on this wiſe, 'I have read, and I have heard, that 'Almighty God, which by his power made Heaven and Earth, and all therein, had ſent his Son 'to dye for ſinners, and that there was hopes 'through his death that I ſhould get pardon; I had no ſooner caſt mine eye upon my God and Saviour, but I was daſhed from all: Mine enemy Satan poſſeſſing my thoughts, ſuggeſted thus unto me.

'Fond Fool (quoth he) why doſt thou thus 'trouble thy ſelf? take thy pleaſure, do what 'thou likeſt, thou ſhalt never be called to an ac-

'count,

'count for any thing: for as the wiſe man dyeth, 'ſo dyeth the fool, and both reſt in the grave to-'gether; there is no God to ſave thee or to pun-'iſh thee, all things were made by nature, and 'when thou dyeſt, there is an end of all thy good 'and bad deeds; thou talkeſt of the Scripture, 'and of a God, and of a Jeſus which thou haſt 'heard of there; ſee thy ſimplicity now, how 'canſt thou prove the Scriptures to be true? alas 'they were made by mens inventions, there is no 'hold for thee to take there.

Thus being unquiet, I ſpent my days and nights in tears and ſighs, and groans, ſometimes thinking with my ſelf *If I ſhall be ſaved, why am I thus?* Then again, concluding that there was no 'Hea-'ven, no God, no Jeſus, no good Angels, only 'an Hell there was, and Devils to carry me thither, 'who waited in every corner, and behind every 'door to ſnatch me away: And I ſaw there was no remedy, but the more I ſtrove, the faſter I ſtuck, I fainted, and laid down mine arms, and cowardly yielded to the enemy, arguing with my ſelf, 'if 'I am a firebrand of Hell, a child of perdition, 'a limb of Satan, and my portion is to be with 'the Devil and his Angels: Why live I longer up-'on the Earth? why go I not to mine own place? Thus content to periſh, I wandred about the ſpace of half a year; no Man nor Woman was privy to, nor knew the leaſt of all my thoughts; at length concluding that the night enſuing, would be my laſt night that I ſhould ſtay here on Earth, as one deſiring to be at home, I careleſly left my Family and went to bed, as it were, *inviting the Devils to come and take their due*; but mark I pray you, the goodneſs of our God, who was with me all this while. and I was not aware of it, for even that ſame night, The little dog leaping upon the bed, I

thought

thought it was the Devil who was come to fetch me away; I ſcreamed forth aloud; but when I perceived it was the dog, and not the Devil, I began to think, Thut *ſurely there was a God that had preſerved me all this while.*

In a moſt grievous agony I ſpent that night weeping, and although it was Winter, yet I ſweat that the water ran from off every part of my Body. Being in this ſad condition, I thought it was not right, but ſurely ſome means might be uſed to get out of it. And riſing the more early in the morning, went up into the higheſt room that was in the Houſe, and looked forth at the window to ſee if I could ſee God; there I beheld the Trees to grow, the Birds to flye, the Heavens how they hanged, and all things that were before me, then I thought they could not make themſelves, no more than I could make my ſelf, and that we muſt needs have a Maker, and this Maker muſt be ſtrong and powerful; Then I fell down upon my knees, crying out in this manner, ‘ O God, if ‘ there be a God, ſhew thy ſelf to me a poor mi- ‘ ſerable wretch, that I am at the point to periſh; Then I thought I ſaw the Lord, but with a frown- ing countenance he looked upon me, as if he had ſaid, ‘ Thou haſt diſpleaſed me, and I will ‘ not hear thee, and turning his back went from me, which ſight was as a dart thruſt through my Soul; for the ſpace of half an hour, divers thoughts entred into my Heart, but before I roſe from off my knees, I reſolved to become an earneſt ſuter to him, and not to do any thing more that ſhould diſpleaſe him, hoping that he would be intreated for that which was paſt.

But now, I beſeech you godly Chriſtians, to take notice of the wonderfull workings of our good God, whoſe judgements are unſearchable, and

and his ways paſt finding out. He had called many times at the door of my heart, and had but ſmall and ſlight entertainment, but now he came violently and powerfully to take poſſeſſion of his own, and ſet me about his work in my ſelf: Then I began to think what I ſhould do, and whether I ſhould go to pacifie the wrath of this terrible and dreadfull God, by whoſe providence I was brought to a Church in *Weſtminſter*, where Mr. *Dod*, a very godly and reverend Divine, was preaching a Funeral Sermon, I went in, hoping to hear ſome comfort, giving attentive heed, his Text was, *With my dead body they ſhall ariſe*; ſee here, my God did not only make a ſcourge of ſmall cords, and whipped out the buyers and ſellers, but he did over-turn, and overturn, and overturn; for this Miniſter did not only preach to the people, but ſhewed me, as it were in a looking-glaſs, mine own condition, and told me that by the gates of Hell many times God was pleaſed to bring his Servants to Heaven; being hungry and thirſty, I was glad of a little food; and preſently catcht hold of that word; Is it ſo thought I, then there is comfort for me, I will about my work, if it pleaſe God to aſſiſt me: In his Sermon he asked divers queſtions, to which my heart made anſwer, ſo that I came home joyfull, longing to hear more of his Doctrine, which fell out as if it had been on purpoſe for my ſake, ſo that for a month, or five weeks, I heard two, three, four, or five Sermons, from him conſtantly every week, wherein he bid me try and prove whether I had Faith or no, whether I did hate my ſins or no, and what have been the ſigns and fruits thereof: He likewiſe bid me ſearch the Scriptures, for they are true, and compare my condition with the children of God there; But after he was ſenſible of my condition, which

I made known to him privately, he was very laborious to bring my Soul out of the jaws of Death, and to raise it up to Jesus Christ, for which pains, I hope my God will reward him to his everlasting comfort.

But one thing I had almost forgot. When I was in the depth of my spiritual dejection, I was utterly denyed all outward comforts, my God hiding his face I was troubled, the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, seemed in their courses to fight against me, my neighbours fell out with me, and mocked me, my kindred deserted me, my Captain Christ offended, made me run the gauntlet, and every Souldier had a lash at me, whatsoever happened unto me, brought sorrow to my heart.

But when I was perswaded that the Scriptures were true, I set my self to search them, to see what comfort I could find there; beginning at the Alpha of *Genesis*, I found, In the beginning God created the Heaven, and the Earth, and all therein; Well then, though I, there is a God; but viewing a little further, I found this God offended, and Man in a lost condition, but presently a remedy promised; going on, I found the Paschal Lamb, the brazen Serpent, the bunch of Grapes, the scape Goat, and divers other things to be types of that promised Seed; I likewise took a view of the afflictions of *Joseph*, *David*, and *Job*, that did much ease my grief. Coming to that place where my God spake by his Prophet, 'Come, let us reason together, though your sins were as scarlet, 'I will make them as white as snow, though they 'were like crimson, they shall be like wool; And 'though you had lain among the pots, yet shall 'ye be like doves wings, covered over with silver; Then I thought, will the Lord reason with sinners? will he vouchsafe a Parley? O that I were able

able to anſwer him one of a thouſand! O that theſe promiſes belonged unto me! O that this God were reconciled unto me! How happy ſhould I be; how happy is that man *whoſe Tranſgreſſions are forgiven, and whoſe ſins are covered?* O, how bleſſed is that man *unto whom the Lord imputeth no ſin*! I found the ſame Prophet *Iſaiah* propheſie of my Saviours birth in his 9th Chapter, and in his 53, he lively ſets forth his Paſſion, and in the 55, the Lord inviting me with a Proclamation; *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come*; then I anſwered, Lord, I would fain come, but how ſhall I come? I have nothing to bring to pacifie thine anger, O that I could ſee thee ſmile upon me, as once I ſaw thee frown, how happy ſhould I be: then I called to mind that I had heard, and read, that Jeſus Chriſt *ſhed his blood for ſinners, and that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould be ſaved*; and I was ſomething incouraged to petition in his Name on this manner.

'Heal me O Lord, and I ſhall be healed; turn 'me, and I ſhall be turned; convert me, and I 'ſhall be converted. O ſave me, my God, and I 'ſhall be ſaved; take away this ſtony heart of 'mine, and give me an heart of fleſh, renew a 'right Spirit within me, reſtore me to thoſe joys 'that I was wont to find in thee, for thy loving 'kindneſs is better than thouſands of Rivers of 'Oyl; O caſt me not away whom thou haſt had 'ſo much patience withal; O caſt me not away 'whom thou haſt bought with ſo dear a price; O 'forſake me not in this my great neceſſity, O 'look upon that ever-ſtreaming fountain of thy 'Sons blood, which is poured forth for all them 'that believe; Lord I believe, help thou my un-'belief; O pardon, pardon I beſeech thee, for-'give me all my ſins, my Sermon-ſins, my Sabbath-

'ſins,

' ſins, my every-days ſins, my other peoples ſins,
' my ſins of omiſſion, my ſins of commiſſion, my
' ſins of ignorance, my ſins of knowledge, my ſins
' of preſumption, my ſins of willfulneſs; O Lord,
' forgive me my known and ſecret ſins, O pardon
' the ſins that I have committed this day, O ſpeak
' the word only, and thy Servant ſhall be healed,
Amen.

Thus when the Lord had opened my mouth to ſpeak unto him, I gathered a great deal of ſtrength, and had much hope that he would be intreated; but not ſetting ſo great an eſteem on my Saviour Jeſus Chriſt as I ought, I thought I *muſt bring ſomthing with me to pacifie my God*; *I thought I muſt make my ſelf all fair*, and beautiful, before my God would love me, but how to do this I knew not; for the ſpace of eleven years I ſought all opportunities to pleaſe him, yet when I examined my ways, works, and actions, I found they were ſo far from pleaſing him, that they were rather motives to ſtir him up to anger, if he ſhould be ſevere to mark what I did amiſs; many times I thought upon the ſad condition that I had been in, and how the Lord had reſtored me. then my heart was elevated and over-joyed; I found a great deal of love in my ſelf towards God, but was not ſure of Gods love to me, which I eſteemed above all the World; the honour of God was ſo dear unto me, that I could ſometimes ſay unto him, ' Lord
' if there be no way to bring honour to thy
' Name, but by my confuſion, then let me be
' confounded; but ſure Lord, thou maiſt gain
' more glory in ſaving me, than in damning me,
' the dead cannot bring honour to thy Name,
' for who ſhall give thee thanks in the pit? the
' living, the living, they ſhall praiſe thee, as I hope to do hereafter.

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Many times I prayed, and had many petitions granted me preſently, and at other times I prayed, and was denyed what I begged, but had what I deſired in a better way; in all Diſpenſations I found my God with me, either with his preventing, aſſiſting, or ſupporting graces, I received innumerable favours from him, yet could I not be perſwaded that they came from his love, but that rather they were to augment my ſcore; I was ſtill labouring and inquiring how I might come to be aſſured of Gods love, which he was pleaſed at length to ſhew me in ſome meaſure, on this manner; In the ſixt of *John* I hear my Saviour Jeſus Chriſt telling me, 'that I cannot come to him except 'God our Father draw me, and if I come to him, 'him, he will in no wiſe caſt me out, but will 'raiſe me up at the laſt day; I am perſwaded, that it was my God alone that did draw me to my Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, that will receive me, and will raiſe me up at the laſt Day. In *John* 17. I hear him praying to his Father for me, whoſe requeſt I am confident ſhall not be denyed.

Nay further, by faith I ſee my Saviour Jeſus Chriſt ſuffering for me, nailed upon the Croſs for me, wounded, buffeted, ſtript, and ſpit upon for me; dead, buryed, roſe again, aſcended into Heaven, and ſitteth on the right hand of his Father, and my God, making interceſſion for me; which gives me aſſurance of my Gods everlaſting and unchangeable love, in, and through my Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, towards me, and that not for any thing that was in me, but for his ſake, he ſaid unto me, *when I was in my blood, live*; and I know I do believe and am regenerated by the Holy Ghoſt.

1. Becauſe I find ſuch an alteration in my ſelf, that whereas before I could not believe there was a God

God, now I am ſure there is a Great and an Almighty God, and he is my loving Father. 2. Before I durſt not lift up mine eyes to Heaven, now I can with boldneſs cry, Abba, dear Father. 3. Before I did not regard the people of God, now all my delight is with the Saints that are upon the Earth. 4. I love to hear my God well ſpoken of, it grieves me to hear, or ſee him diſhonoured. 5 I long to ſee my Saviour, and to kiſs thoſe wounds from which iſſued ſtreams of blood, which pacified Gods anger towards me. 6. I rejoyce when I think of death, knowing that it is ſwallowed up in victory. 7 I often hear this voice in mine ears, *Ariſe ye dead, and come to judgment*; I rejoyce to hear this ſaying, *He that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry.* 8. I deſire ſanctity of Life, and help from my Father to diſcharge my duty in that Calling wherein God hath placed me. 9. I long to hear him ſpeak, who ſaith in the *Omega* of the *Revelation*, *Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me; even ſo come Lord Jeſus, come quickly,* Amen, Amen. *M. K.*

XI. *Experiences of* E. R.

I was born and bred up of godly Parents; yet Satan ſo far tempted me to commit that deteſtable ſin of telling a Lye, about eleven years of age, againſt a Siſter of mine, who was ſhrewdly and ſeverely corrected by my Parents for that fault, tho' none of hers, but mine, and I had not grace at that time to lay it to heart; but three months after I had a fit of Sickneſs, and a grievous touch in my Conſcience for that ſin committed againſt God, and my Siſter, that I ſaw nothing but deſperation, and feared that the horrors of Hell-fire would ſeize on my Soul and Body for this ſin, and Satan told me, that there was no Salvation for me, for God knew me not, neither would he own me; but

but if I would either hang my ſelf, or cut my throat, or take the bedſtaff to thruſt down my throat, then I ſhould never be tormented more, but look how an Ox dyed, ſo ſhould I. Then I cryed out to my Parents, and ſaid, that I was damned, and that there was no Salvation for me, but that I muſt go to Hell; my Parents watched me, and ſearched narrowly to ſee what inſtruments I had prepared: Then the Devil tempted me to rend the pillow, and pick out ſome of the feathers to ſwallow them down, which I did, and it had like to have coſt me my life, for I was very nigh death by this means.

My Parents ſent for a Doctor to adminiſter ſome things to me, which he did, and when I was a little recovered, they ſent for Mr. *Knewſlub*, Miniſter in *Edmonds-bury*, and Mr. *Rogers* Miniſter of *Dedham*, who took a great deal of pains with me, and asked me whom I did believe in; I told them that I did believe in God that he would damn me; they asked me, if God would damn me becauſe I did believe in him; I anſwered no, but it was for that ſin committed againſt God, and my innocent ſiſter; they asked me, whether I was not ſorry for that act, I told them yes, I had cauſe enough to be ſorry, for I muſt be damned for that ſin; then they asked me if I was ſorry with all my heart for my offences, I told them I had great reaſon to be ſorry, for by this I had loſt the love of God, and my intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt; they replyed, that Chriſt had left ſweet comforts for penitent ſinners, and they were to adminiſter it unto them: But I replyed, it was for ſuch a ſinner as I was; for there could be no Salvation for me: They told me Chriſt dyed for ſinners, and ſuch ſinners as I was, for they ſaid I was a penitent ſinner; but I replyed, Chriſt never dyed for ſuch a one as I was, neither could his

mercy

mercy ſave me; Then they bid me have a care how I did preſumptuouſly go about to judge my own ſoul, and that I was not fit to judge my ſelfin the condition I was under, for it was a greater ſin in ſo doing, than to comit that ſin of lying againſt God, for God was a God of mercy, but I had no mercy, thus raſhly to judge my own ſoul; I replyed, that they were as bad as I, for they came to help to carry my ſoul into Hell headlong; they told me no, but they would ingage their ſouls for my ſoul, that I ſhould find comfort from them in Chriſt Jeſus; with that I cryed out, O happy day would that be that I might find comfort before my departure; they told me that Chriſt was a Chriſt of tenderneſs, that I was a beloved Chriſtian, and Chriſt was preparing comfort for me, and it was Chriſt that had opened my eyes to ſee my ſin, and he would alſo open my heart to loath ſin, and he would pardon my ſin; yet I told them no, that he wouldnever open my heart bnt with terror, for I was born to be damned, and muſt be damned; and that Chriſt never dyed for ſuch a ſinner as I was; this I ſpoke with great ſighing; and they asked me what made me think ſo? I told them that I ſaw nothing but Death, and Hell, and confuſion of body and ſoul; they asked me why I ſighed, and wept, ſo ſore? *I* told them becauſe now *I* was going into Hell, for the Devil with his chains was ready to throw me into the utter pit of darkneſs; they ſaid, Wherefore? *I* told them for offending the Lord my Creator, & did wiſh my ſelf to be in Hell, that *I* might be out of miſery, and might no longer feel the vengeance of God; with that they went to prayers, each of them an hour, and when the laſt Miniſter prayed, *I* cryed out, 'O Lord my God, my King, and Savi-'our, have mercy upon me a poor diſtreſſed ſinner; Then Maſter *Rogers* came to me, and took me by

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the hand, and said, That he was glad to hear me call upon the Lord, yet *I* said, *I* should be damned, for *I* was none of his, and that the Lord was none of my God.

The next morning, I had some comfort but that left me again, and I was under the same condition of ebbings and flowrings for sixteen weeks together, before I had any firm hopes of my Salvation; and having taken no rest a long time, I fell into a slumber; and in my sleep I imagined there did appear unto me a little child in white, with an apple in one hand, and a white wand in the other, and he carried me til I came into a place where I did see much terrour of fire, and shreeking, and a great deep ditch where was nothing to hold by, yet I must go over that burning lake; and he took the white wand and laid it over the ditch, and bad me tread upon it, and fear not, but I refused; then he came and took me by the hand and trundled his apple on the wand, which bowled over very level, and with that I said, It is the Lord, therefore I will venture, and did venture over with this child in my hand; and when I came to shore I cryed out with fear, my Lord, my God and my Saviour, am I in Hell, or am I redeemed out of Hell? with that I awaked, being in a great passion and fear, and there being my friends about me, they told me, I was redeemed out of Hell; I asked, How could they tell? had they been there? for I told them that *I* had been newly there; then I cryed out, Oh! where is that sweet Babe that was with me? they asked me what Babe, and what was the shape of it, I declared unto them as before, and they told me, That it was Jesus Christ that had appeared in the shape of a Child, and that he had overcome Death, and Hell, for me; then I cryed out, and said, blessed be Jesus Christ for

for evermore, and did intreat thoſe people that were there with my Father, that they would go to prayers for me, that thoſe comfortable revelations which I had ſeen, and my Faith in Chriſt, might never depart from me; yet for three years after I had many ebbings and flowings, and much fear poſſeſſed me, ſo that Satan would tell me I was more afraid of Hell, than of offending God; but I boldly ſat up in my bed, and told Satan, He was a Lyer, and that I would rather be damned than deny Jeſus Chriſt, and ſo Chriſt did appear very comfortably to me, and hath, and doth deliver me out of many troubles very often, and how to ſpeak of them I know no end; yet Satan like a cunning Sophiſter hath been tampering with me to deſpair of Chriſt, but it pleaſed the Lord to bring many promiſes into my mind, and the example alſo of *Mary Magdalen*, and of the woman of *Canaan*; believing, that as Jeſus Chriſt was gracious to them, ſo he would alſo be to me; and Chriſt hath often times revealed unto me, that his grace was ſufficient for me, as he ſaid unto *Paul*; I can ſpeak but little of Jeſus Chriſt, but yet I am fully perſwaded in my Soul, that I ſhould think my ſelf very happy, even to give my life for the glory and honour of his name, if the Lord would count me but worthy of ſuch a favour, and I would not for all the Kingdoms in the world, and the pomp thereof, be in ſuch a condition again; and now my ſoul doth deſire to give up it ſelf unto God, and to walk in the ſtricteſt courſe that his Word doth preſcribe. *E. R.*

XII. *Experiences of* T. M.

ABout the fourteenth year of my age I was put out to be an Apreatice, but was placed with a Maſter in whom I ſaw little of God, his ways were contrary to the ways of God, which was a great trouble

trouble to my Spirit; and the more becauſe ſome rude people Drink, Swear, and be very deboyſt with him. Three or four years after, there grew great diſputes amongſt ſome perſons about Epiſcopacy, Presbytery, Independency, and the like, which made me queſtion with my own thoughts, which was the true way to worſhip God. I applyed my ſelf to Mr. *T.* the Miniſter, and others, yet was not ſatisfied, but after great perplexity of ſpirit, I meditated with my ſelf, and wondred what would be the end of my troubles, for they had been many, eſpecially temptations to deſpair of ſalvation.

But afterwards being retnrned back from my Maſter to my Fathers houſe, lying down once upon a bench I fell aſleep, and dreamed that I was in a green Meddow, where I ſaw various forms of Creatures, ſome furious, others very pleaſing, yet all of them ſeemed monſtruous, and changed their ſhapes often. And beholding my ſelf alone in the middeſt of them, I was grievouſly troubled, and then there ſeemed to appear a great red Dragon; before it came at me I thought a little Child was put in my arms, which was ſo beautiful and comely that I admired it, and was ſo taken with beholding it, that it put the fear of the Dragon for the preſent out of mind; But the Dragon afterwards drew near, and ſorely affrighted me; but both my ſelf and the child were taken away, and carried up an hill, and the Dragon purſued us; and being often ready to fall in running up the hill, I feared that the Dragon would catch me, but my ſtrength being come to me I got up to the top of the hill, and the Dragon made up after me. When I was got up to the top there appeared a brightneſs from Heaven, which guſhed forth like a ſtaſh of Lightning, and ſplit the Dragon in pieces, at which I

rejoyced exceedingly. Then the Child was put into my Arms again, and I asked it what was its name, it said, *Emanuel*; I asked who was its Father, it said, *I am*, I asked, who was its Mother, it said, *Eternity*, I asked, from whence he came, he said, *from my Father out of Heaven*; I asked to whom he came, and what was his errand here, he said, *to save that which was lost, and return again*; I asked him, if he would dwell with me while he stayed, he said, *he could not be detained according to that frame and figure he was in, but after death he would dwell with me in another frame*; the thought of death grieved me, but the child bid me not *to weep at it, for in this World, that which is beauty must be destroyed, and that which is contemptible must be exalted.* I then saw my self very contemptible, and poor, and troubled, and in these thoughts the child was taken away from me.

Then my Father coming into the room made a noise, whereat I awaked, much distracted, and troubled in my thoughts, and so perplexed that I knew not what to do, and the more, by seeking to understand what I had seen, because I knew not how to be satisfied, in some doubts that lay very sad and heavy upon my Soul. But I have since found much comfort out of Gods *word*, where Christ saith, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* And the Lord saith, *I have called thee by name.* And again, he saith in another place, *I will bear in thee a poor and afflicted people, and they shall serve me.* And in *Esay* he saith, *I will gather my Lambs with my Arms, and gently lead those that are with young.* and then he hath promised, *That he will never lay more upon his people, then he will enable them to bear.* And I have these effects of my faith; 1. My heart is led out to love God, who is eternal, and invisible, and incompre-

incomprehenſible, I love him in all his diſpenſations towards me, and in the meaneſt Creature, though never ſo deſpiſed; I deſire to own God where ever I ſee him. 2. I find my heart very full in duty, yet I have been ſometimes troubled by ſome cholerick diſtempers that have tranſported me in ſome diſputes which I am very ſorry for, and reſolve to leave. 3. I love the Lord, who hath heard my Prayer, and now at laſt ſatisfied me in every ſcruple of my conſcience. 4. My deſire is, to walk according to the rules of the Goſpel, all the days of my life. *T. M.*

XIII. *Experiences of* J. H.

MAny years ago I had ſome yernings after the truths of Jeſus Chriſt, and being in the Country, and hearing Mr. *Young* a Miniſter in *Leiceſterſhire* preach twice a day, the Word wrought ſo on my heart, that I took great delight to hear him; but being jeered by the people for a Puritan, I did leave off hearing for a time. And being in the Town near Mr. *Young*, ſometimes as I went abroad I met him, and Mr. *Young* would ask me whether I did know Jeſus Chriſt or not, and what I did think him to be, I told him that I had read in the Scriptures, and they held him out to be the Son of God, *and that he came to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt*: Then ſaid Mr. *Young* unto me, why do you draw back in not coming to hear the Word; I told him, it was becauſe of the deridings of the people; but ſaid Mr. *Young*, you muſt perſevere, and hold on in a continuance; opening ſome Scriptures, as that of the *Hebrews*, that *being once enlightened and having taſted the good word, and of the powers of the world to come, if that Soul ſhould fall away, then there would be nothing but a fearful looking for the fiery indignation of God.* This did much trouble me, ſo that I was very fearful to

be damned. Then Mr. *Young* did open that Scripture in 1 Theſſ. 1. 4, 5. *You ſay that you know Jeſus Chriſt to be your Saviour, therefore take heed, for Jeſus ſhall appear in flaming fire, againſt all thoſe that know him not, nor obey not his Goſpel*; This put me in great fear and horror, worſe than before. Then I did intreat Mr. *Young* to tell me, what the Goſpel was, and he bid me read in the firſt of *Matth.* and there it was this, that *The Goſpel was the glad tidings to the ſhepherds*, that it was *the good will of God to ſend Jeſus Chriſt to ſave ſinners, whereof* I did confeſs with the Apoſtle *Paul*, that I *was chief*. Mr. *Young* at parting gave me theſe Inſtructions, That I ſhould be very careful what company I did go into, and that I ſhould always *remember my Creator in the days of my youth*, and this was very freſh in my memory, and did ſtrengthen me very much againſt the temptations of Satan, and kept me from frequenting thoſe Companions that I did formerly uſe; and if at any time, I met them and heard their idle words, then this Scripture did often come into my mind, *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth*, and did very much chear my ſpirits; and carry me along for many years, untill it pleaſed God to bring me to *London*, and coming to Black Fryers under the Miniſtry of Dr. *Gouge*, I was very much edified for two years together, but coming to live at *Weſtminſter*, I did profit but little again, untill it pleaſed God to ſend Mr. *Marſhal*, and hearing of him ſpeaking out of *Jeremiah* 14. of the famine being in the outward man, but there was the famine of the Word of God at *Weſtminſter*, it made me very attentive to his Doctrine, he complaining what a barbarous place *Weſtminſter* had been, but now he did hope that the Word of God would take effect in the hearts of ſome of his Hearers, and truly ſo

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it did on my heart, for I was a conſtant hearer of him, and then going to a friends family, I heard them repeat the Notes that they had taken from Maſter *Marſhal*, and ſince I continued with that Company of Godly people; and now it is the deſire of my Soul to have fellowſhip with the Father and the Son, that my Soul may thrive in grace, and in the knowledge and great love of that God, that ſo loved the World, that he gave his Son to dye to ſave ſuch as I am, and that whoſoever comes to him ſhould not periſh but have eternal life; with whom I beſeech the Lord I may walk in a more cloſe way to the end of my life, than ever I have yet done. *J. H.*

XIV. *Experiences of* T. P.

I Have had thoughts concerning my Spiritual condition, and made ſearch into my Soul touching my eſtate in relation to GOD; and what teſtimony I can find of my intereſt in and converſion to God. And I have found this to be the way of Gods working to bring me to himſelf, through his great mercy in the Lord Jeſus. It hath pleaſed God ever ſince I was born, to place me under the means of the Goſpel, the neglect whereof hath been a great trouble and grief unto my Soul; this with many ſins more, lay heavy upon my Conſcience, eſpecially ſome offence and wrong offered againſt the People of God, inſomuch that the terrors of Hell laid hold upon me, and I began with *Cain* to cry out, that *my burthen was more than I was able to bear*: I was a damned creature, I was out of the preſence and favour of God, and never like to ſee his face with comfort, ready with *Judas* to deſtroy my ſelf. I continued in thiis condition many years. But God of his exceeding mercy kept me from that great ſin, and at laſt I received ſome comfort, in that the Lord proclaimeth himſelf to be *the Lord*

God, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, in forgiving sins, and that *he desired not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should live.* And again he saith, *If our sins were as Scarlet, he will make them as white as Snow or Wooll*; Again, *I am the Lord, and change not, therefore ye Sons of* Jacob *are not consumed.* These with many other promises of Free Grace and Mercy yielded some comfort to my Soul, yet for a long time I was troubled; if I prayed, I feared my prayers were an abomination unto the Lord; at last knowing the Lord heard the *Ninivites*, that were Heathens, I thought he was as able to save my Soul. And it hath been my care to wait upon God in the means, knowing that *Faith cometh by hearing the word*, and upon all occasions to search my own heart, what part of the word belonged unto me, and what did not; I received some comfort from these promises, *I will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoaking flax*; *Come unto me all ye that and weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest*; and, *He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast off.* These gracious promises, cause me to desire to draw near to God in union, and in communion, with whom I hope for fellowship to all eternity. *T. P.*

XV. *Experiences of* M. W.

WHen I lived in *Ireland*, and was in fulness of outward enjoyments, I had my thoughts much taken up about the things of the World, but little seriously touching the Salvation of my Soul; but some years since, being at *Liverpole* in *Lancashire*, I heard a Sermon preached by Mr. *Tompson*; his Text was, *Redeem the time because the days are evil*: Many things he spake so home to my Soul, that I was very much troubled I had spent so many days in evil: That I had been covetous, and proud, and impatient in the former days of my life. Yet if pleased the Lord, I had

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an Husband that was an honest Man, and one that feared God, who had often given me good counsel, and perswaded me to make some promises of amendment; But I had Children, and Servants, and Cattel, and lived plentifully in *Ireland*, from whence I had lately come with my Husband and Family; and indeed there had been no real conversion, though I had often thoughts towards God, and especially I was given much to impatiency, for which my Husband had often reproved me: But still I went on in my sin, being not sensible of my sad condition therein, until I came into *England*: After which this Sermon of Mr. *T.* did much humble me, and wrought upon my heart a very great sense of my sins. And I was afraid that I had committed the sin of Blasphemy against God, as *Job* said, his children perhaps had done some way or other, because I had sometimes cursed some body, or something that had angred me, and in passion rapt out sometimes at Oath; many nights I watered my bed with my tears about it, and went to Mr. *West* a Minister near *Liverpoole*, and other godly people who used such means, as God led them forth to, for my comfort; but I was still afflicted in my Soul, about the space of three weeks, and then I found much comfort being perswaded by good counsel to trust in God, which I did, and was heartily sorry for my sins.

And then my Husband was troubled in mind himself, and the Lord made me an instrument to comfort him, as well as I could. But about five months after, he had abundance of joy and comfort, and expected death, saying, that he was perswaded he should be killed, and so (presently after he was setled in his mind) it fell sadly out. For the Enemy took *Liverpool*, and killed my Husband, and a child, both before my face, and stript, and wound-

ded me, and a child of five years old; and it was thought I could not live. And this was a ſtrong tryal; and I was much tempted, my ſenſes me thought were going from me, and my heart I thought would have rent in pieces, yet I prayed. and the Lord heard me, I thought it was too much for me to bear: But I remembred my Saviours words, *He that will not forſake Father, or Mother, or Siſter, or Brother, or Husband, or Child for Chriſt, is not worthy of him*, and I deſire to give glory to his name. I conſider that I muſt part with all for Chriſt, I ſtrove hard againſt my own weakneſs; and my heart ſaid, that God was juſt in all his dealings with me.

I thought, when I had conſidered of it, that I did but ſuffer as an evil doer my ſelf; but our cauſe was Gods, and our Enemies Popiſh Rebels; *Paul* was ready not only to ſuffer, but to dye at *Jeruſalem* for the name of Chriſt; ſo I took it patiently, giving glory to God, and believing that God, who was come ſo near me, would not forſake me. I was aſſured with much joy, that the Lord would bring me to himſelf, and in this confidence did rejoyce with my wounded Child, and a little Daughter in a Barn where we were put, having got a piece of an old Bible; and then and ſince I have found much ſettledneſs in my faith from ſeveral Promiſes of the Lord, revealed in his holy Word, ſome of which follow, John 15. 7. *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye ſhall ask what you will, and it ſhall be done unto you.* I truſt in God never to depart from his word, and therefore hope to find comfort in the end, and do find comfort in the way, in that Chriſt abideth with me, Matth. 5 6. *Bleſſed are they which do hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs, for they ſhall be filled.* Though the Lord hath thus emptyed me of ſome worldly comforts, yet he hath given me an hungring and thirſting Soul after

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ter himself, and therefore I laid hold of this promise of blessedness, as made to me, *Matth.* 11.28. where Christ saith, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* It this I have been, and still am much comforted, in the greatest afflictions, that God hath laid upon me, in whom alone is true rest.

And as further testimonies of my love to God, and evidences of my faith, I have these comfortable inferences, which speak much peace to my Soul. 1. My love to God and Christ, is more than to all things in the World. 2. I find a great difference in my affections to God, and to the World, and the things thereof; so that my Children, which of all worldly things are most near and dear to me, yet if God should take them from me, I could freely give them. 3. I find the Spirit striving against the flesh, so that when I hear Dr. *Holmes*, speaking of that still voice, which a Believer hears, as it were, from the Spirit, it did so inlarge my heart, that for joy and great comfort it made me weep, through the influence of the Spirit sensibly then upon my heart; and so at other times also, I find much comfort in the Spirit of God, which is my greatest joy. 4. I do rejoyce mightily in the Ordinances, and apply what I hear to my self, as well as I can, and when I hear any thing against any evil that I can apply to my self, the Lord draws forth my heart frequently to pray to God, that I may do nothing that may displease him. And I thank my God, I find a full willingness in desire, and affection to submit to every truth of Jesus Christ. 5. When I hear comforts spoken of that concern me, I am so joyful, that it fills my heart, and sometimes fetches tears from mine eyes, as particularly when Master *M.* said, That afflictions were a testimony of Gods love to his people, as *Lazarus* was sorely afflicted, and dearly

beloved. 6. Since I heard Mr. *B.* and others, as alſo (ſuitable to my condition) ſeveral things laid open by Mr. *W.* in ſome caſes of Conſcience; I have been much affected to ſettle my ſelf ſo by the power of Chriſt, that I may find peace in my conſcience in all things before I dye, and have made it my chief buſineſs, and have found comfort in the meetings of godly people. 7. I bleſs the name of the Lord, my affections are loving to the people of God, and I know I love them dearly, and my heart riſeth to hear them ſpoken againſt; I had rather bear reproaches my ſelf, than than ſee any one of them wronged, or ſuffer. 8. I deſire as to live with God in glory in Heaven, ſo to lead my life to his glory here on Earth in grace, according to the rule of his holy Word, and the examples of the Saints therein expreſſed; and I could heartily wiſh, were it poſſible, that I might never ſin more. And I have I bleſs God a clear diſcerning, through the power of the Spirit of Grace, that the Goſpel is the Word of truth to Salvation. 9. When I come before the Lord, I ſee nothing but emptineſs in my ſelf, and therefore truſt in the fulneſs of Chriſt, in whoſe power and Spirit I find much comfort, and deſire always, that I may come prepared with that wedding garment that may never be taken away from me; *for of my ſelf I can do nothing, but through Chriſt, if he abide in me, and I in him, I ſhall do all things.* M. W.

XVI. *Experiences of* I. I.

WHen I was in the midſt of my wealth, and worldly enjoyments, I was vain, covetous, and wholy had my heart taken up with the things of the World, little or nothing minding the things of God, or thinking of a change, but went on in preſumption, putting the evil day far off, minding only for the preſent what pleaſed the fleſh,

fleſh, untill about eight years ſince, I had many outward croſſes befell me, and was in ſome want; and then being under that diſpenſation, I was much troubled, and full of grief; I ſought to the Lord, and begged deliverance from my afflictions and diſtreſſes, as to outward wants, but had not an heart to conſider what was the cauſe, or to ſeek out the mind of God in it, until I heard Dr. *Holmes* ſhewing ſin to be the cauſe of all our croſſes. The conſideration hereof did come cloſe unto my ſpirit, and I had a clear conviction of my vanity, and fooliſh doting on worldly things, which had juſtly provoked the Lord, I hope for my good, to lay thoſe croſſes upon me, which, though they were for a time bitter, yet God hath ſince ſweetned.

But my ſorrow was then doubled, and I was dejected, not only for my outward croſſes, but more eſpecially for my carnal heart, and vain converſation, whereby I had ſtirred up the anger of the Lord againſt me: I went to the Ordinances, hoping to find comfort from the Word; but the weight of my ſins, and my ſufferings ſo preſſed me down, that I found much heavineſs: My ſins eſpecially lay heavy upon me, and I ſaw little hope of comfort; yet the Lord was pleaſed to work in my heart a loathing of ſin, as well as trouble for the affliction it had brought upon me. But about a year ſince, I heard Maſter *W.* prove by Scripture, in a Sermon very effectual to my comfort, that thoſe who have been the greateſt of ſinners, if they do heartily and really repent, and turn to God by faith in Chriſt, and lead a new life, the Lord will receive them to mercy. Hereupon I argued with my Soul, that though I had been a great ſinner, yet the Lord had brought my heart to a loathing of thoſe ſins I loved; and of all ſins, and to turn to the Lord, and ſincerely to deſire to ſerve him: That

therefore

therefore there was hope of mercy for me: I heard Mr. *W.* Mr. *M.* and others, and frequented divers meetings, where I found much comfort,

Thoſe ſeveral places of Scripture, in which I chiefly found comfort from the Promiſes of God are, *Matth.* 11. 28, 29, 30. where Chriſt ſaith, *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye ſhall find reſt unto your Souls; for my yoak is eaſie, and my burden light.* This made me to hope, that as the Lord hath given me an heavy heart laden with the ſenſe of ſin, ſo Chriſt Jeſus will give me comfort; for in the 12 verſe of the ſame Chapter, it is ſaid, *a bruiſed reed ſhall he not break, and and ſmoaking flax ſhall he not quench.* And though I had diſhonoured Chriſt, yet I had not blaſphemed the Holy-ghoſt, and therefore had incouragement to believe from the words of Chriſt, Luke 12. 10. *Whoſoever ſhall ſpeak a word againſt the Son of Man, it ſhall be forgiven him, but unto him that Blaſphemeth againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it ſhall not be forgiven.* I was comforted to wait upon the Lord in hope, becauſe he had humbled my Soul, and opened mine eyes to ſee mercy offered to me, and this was ſtrengthend from that example, *Lament.* 30.20. to verſe 26. *My Soul hath them ſtill in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to mind, therefore have I hope. It is the Lords mercy that we are not conſumed, becauſe his compaſſions fail not. They are new every morning: Great is thy faithfulneſs, the Lord is my portion, ſaith my Soul, therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the Soul that ſeeketh him.* I was much incouraged from hence to ſeek the Lord, and hope in his mercy.

My conſcience told me, I was a great ſinner, and

and deſerved death and Hell, but my hope was in God, and ſtrengthened from that promiſe, Ezek. 18. 21, 22, 23. *If the wicked will turn from his ſins, that he hath committed, and keep all my Statutes, and do that which is lawfull and right, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not dye; All his tranſgreſſions that he hath committed, they ſhall not be mentioned unto him: In the righteouſneſs that he hath done he ſhall live. Have I any pleaſure at all that the wicked ſhall dye, ſaith the Lord God, and not that he ſhould turn from his ways and live?* And the Lord was pleaſed to put into my ſpirit a very great reſolution to ſerve him for the time to come, and I praiſe my God, I have had ſince much joy in duties of Piety. and much ſweetneſs from the Word of God, and goldly Miniſters; I have no deſire to enjoy the pleaſures and vanities of the World, as I have done, but my heart now takes delight in God, and communion with his people; and the Lord hath given me an heart to diſcern a beauty, and deſirableneſs, in the ways of God, which are more joyful to me now, than ever ſin was formerly; and when I come at the Ordinances, I often find and feel ſuch heavenly refreſhments from the Lord upon my heart, that it makes me exceeding full of joy. There is ſuch a love upon my heart to God, that I dare not willingly offend him in any thing; I rejoyce to hear his name ſpoken of, and his glory exalted: And I find a very great affection drawn by the power of God from my heart to ſuch as ſeem to be his people. *J. J.*

XVII. *Experiences of* E. C.

ABout nine years agoe at the Birth of a Child, I had very great temptations of deſtroying ing my ſelf, and have had oftentimes a knife put into my hand to do it, ſo that I durſt not be left by my ſelf alone; and when I had conſidered what the

the cauſes might be, my Conſcience did hint moſt my neglecting of duties which I had many opportunities to have performed, they being the Ordinances of God. Thus I continued till two years agoe I buryed a Child, which was a very great trouble to me to part with, and then was I more fully convinced of ſin, which cauſed my burthen to be the greater, ſo that I could ſeldom have any other thoughts but of deſperation; but the Lord kept me by his great mercy, ſo that ſometimes I could pray with devotion, and diſcern the Lord to remove this great trouble from me; I did plainly find that thoſe great temptations were very much leſſened, which was a very great comfort unto my ſpirit; but yet this ſtill was upon me, that I could read the Promiſes, but I found none of them to belong to me; I could not ſay, God was mine, or had diſcovered him ſelf to me, in pardoning my ſins; yet this I had often thoughts of, that I would throw my ſelf upon Chriſt, and if I periſhed I periſhed; and ſince, I bleſs God, I have found ſome ſatisfaction, in ſeveral places of *Scripture*: As,

Firſt, In Matth. 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* And feeling ſuch a burthen then upon my Soul, I relyed upon that true reſt. Another is in 1 John 2. 2. *And he is the reconciliation for our ſins, and not for ours only, but for the ſins of the whole World.* I being one in the World, I applyed this to my ſelf; and in 1 John 1 14. *The Father ſent the Son to be the Saviour of the World.* Another place of Scripture is, John 3. 17. *For God ſent not his Son into the World to condemn the World, but that the World through him might be ſaved.* And in verſe 35. *He that believeth on the Son hath everlaſting life.* Upon this account I ſaid, *I believe, Lord, help my unbeleef.* And in the ſixth Chapter of *John*, and 67, and

and 68, verſes, *Jeſus ſaid unto his Diſcipes Will ye go from me alſo?* Peter *ſaid unto him, Lord, whither ſhall we go, for thou haſt the words of eternal life.* So that I will now wait upon the Lord for a further manifeſtation of himſelf unto my Soul, in the uſe of his Ordinances; although I have not in times paſt been fed with the Childrens bread, yet now I do believe I ſhall not be denyed thoſe crums of Spiritual comforts, to nouriſh and refreſh my wearyed Spirit; for God ſaith, Iſa. 55. 1. *Ho! every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy Wine and Milk without money, and without price.* And I praiſe God, I have found of late a very great manifeſtation of Gods working a change upon my heart, and drawing me by true faith to himſelf.

1. About a quarter of a year ſince, I heard Mr. *B.* on the luke-warmneſs of the Church of *Laodicea*, ſhewing that the Lord would refuſe none that come to him in humbleneſs of Spirit, and ſincerity of heart; then I thought ſurely I might make uſe of theſe full promiſes made to thoſe that come to him; and it put me to ſearch the Scriptures, which I did, and found a greater influence upon my ſpirit in the underſtanding of the Word than before. 2. I am in all things that I do, fearful of offending God, and my deſire is, to do all things to his glory. 3. My love to God is ſo hearty, that I delight to be meditating of God, and to have communion with him, and could wiſh that I might be wholly, if it were poſſible, with God; and my heart is never ſo at reſt, as when I am reading of his Truths, and hearing others ſpeak of them. 4. I am ſo little affected to the World, that I account it nothing; I can willingly leave all for God, and I hope ſuffer any thing for God, if he ſhould pleaſe to call me to it, ſo far as I can judge of my own heart, but herein truſting

ing in the power of Christ. 5. Sin is loathsom to me, so that the affections that I did bear to some evils are gone, and I now loath them more than before I loved them. 6. I have many conflicts between the flesh and the spirit, but I find (in those strivings) my heart most cleaving to follow the mind of God, knowing that if I give way to sin, Satan enters; and with all my Soul I desire and delight to follow the leadings of Gods Spirit. 7. In all things the resolutions of my heart are for doing those things that may please God, and that without delay; being fearful to offend God, which through infirmity I do, I have great trouble in spirit for it; and my resolutions aae always against every thing that may hinder my peace with God. 8. I find in my heart so great a peace between God and my Conscience, that should God now call me, I shall be very well contented to go to my Saviour. 9. I do not doubt of Gods love to me, because he hath drawn forth my heart fincerely to love him. 10. My love hath been always from a Child to the people of God, and my heart hath been ever troubled when I have heard them evil spoken of. 11. My affections are great to the Ordinances, and my heart longeth after them; and when at any time I come with a cold heart to Duties, yet my heart is frequently warmed, and inlarged in those duties. *E. C.*

XVIII. *Experiences of* D. M.

SOme years since, through many crosses increasing upon me, like an armed man, I flew unto God to seek his mind by prayer, and he discovered to me that it was for my sins, which were then set before me; which caused m to feel the hand of God by afflictions upon me, that sin was the cause of my sufferings, which lay very heavy upon me, and terrified me, so that I thought I had been in the

the way to damnation: And that if it had been in the way to Salvation, every affliction would not come ſo upon me, greater than I thought I could be able to bear. In particular, the Lord diſcovered to me, that I had too much loved my Husband in making an Idol of him, and therefore he juſtly became a great terror to my ſpirit, for he grew an enemy to goodneſs, and ſo an hindrance to me in coming to Chriſt; And while I thus doted on him, he went away from me: I feared, through the ſenſe of that and other ſins, together with the aggravations of my afflictions, that God did not love me; Yet it ſtruck into my heart, that God did not ſtrike willingly, and therefore I endeavoured to ſee what was the mind of God in it, who had taken away my Husband, Goods, and all from me; namely, that he had done it, that I ſhould not hang upon huſks, but ſhould love him. And I found that I had loved the world too much, and ſet my heart too much upon theſe Creature-comforts, and therefore the Lord took them away from me. This wrought upon me great troubles and deſpair, ſo that I cryed till I was almoſt blind: And I had great fear and trembling upon me, that I could not pray, not hear with profit, but thought it was in vain for me to pray, whom God loved not, and whom I had ſo offended.

About a quarter of a year after, I had a temptation by Satan to drown my ſelf in a Pond near *Leeds* in *York-ſhire*, weither the Devil led me, telling me that I might do it there, it being a private place where no body could ſee me; and I came to the Pond ſide, but by the providence of God, having a great love to a young Infant I had, I took that Child in my Arms, and when I came to the place, I looked upon the Child, and conſidered with my ſelf, what ſhall I deſtroy my ſelf

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and my poor Child? and cryed out unto God, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? and had a ſore conflict at that time with the Devil; but me thought at laſt, I heard the Lord ſay to my Soul, as he did to *Paul*, *Truſt in me, my grace is ſufficient for thee.* And then I found ſome comfort, which inlarged my heart, through the aſſiſtance of Gods Spirit, to call upon the name of the Lord, for further aſſiſtance and comfort, and ſo I went back again with much joy, believing that I ſhould have the favour of God. And the Lord put it into my mind to go to one *E. B.* that dwelt by a Moor ſide near *Leeds*, whom I knew was a godly Woman, and ſhe opened to me the troubles of *David* and *Job*, and gave me ſweet comfort, ſaying, God was by me, and I did not ſee him, and as *Job* wiſhed, ſo ſhe wrought upon my heart to wiſh, *O that I could ſee him, O that I could behold him*, and my heart was full of joy, and I cryed, and was much grieved, with very great repentance that I had been ſo ſeduced, and did ſo deſpair of Gods mercies, and had been ſo blinded. And the Lord ſet it upon my ſpirit, that though I had laid all aſide, yet now I ſhould come out of the *Wilderneſs leaning on my Beloved*; and I had a greater affection to the ways of God than ever, and delighted in them more than ever. Before they were a burthen to me; now they were eaſie and ſweet.

Being at *York*, I heard a Miniſter there out of *Hoſea* 2. preach that which wrought much comfort in me, and that Chriſt had promiſed to betroth himſelf to every Believer: And then, and ſince I have much joy in the promiſes of God, and can through the Spirit of God, which I find and feel in my heart, lay hold by faith on them, as my particular intereſt. As Rom. 10. 4. *Chriſt is the end of the Law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.*

Chriſt

Chriſt by hss Spirit hath wrought belief in me, both in his promiſes, and threatnings, and to live according to his Word, therefore I conclude, that I ſhall be ſaved by the righteouſneſs of my Saviour, Rom. 9. 4. *Who are Iſraelites? to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the ſervice of God and the promiſes?* I know that every Believer is a true *Iſraelite*, and brought under the Covenant of grace by Jeſus Chriſt, and that therefore the promiſes of grace and ſalvation belong to me, Rom. 3. 21, 22. *But now the righteouſneſs of God without the Law is manifeſted, being witneſſed by the Law and the Prophets, even the Righteouſneſs of God, which is by Faith of Jeſus unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference:* I being one whom God hath drawn to believe; it is manifeſted unto me, that I have an intereſt in the Righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, to juſtifie me before God by his merits, which are made mine by faith, Hoſea 2. 19, 20. *I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea I will betroth thee unto me in righteouſneſs, and in judgment, and in loving kindneſs, and in mercies; I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulneſs, and thou ſhalt know the Lord.* I find great comfort from this promiſe, in that the Lord doubles and trebles his Promiſes, and enlargeth himſelf ſo freely to the Soul.

And as teſtimonies of my real converſion to God, and union with Jeſus Chriſt, and that reconciliation is made between God and my Soul, I find theſe real evidences wrought by Gods bleſſed Spirit in me. 1. I find in my heart great love to God, that when God ſaith, *Seek my face*; my heart rejoyns again, ſaying, *thy face Lord will I ſeek.* And I find nothing ſo dear to me as the love of God and if my heart deceive me not, I could bear and ſuf-

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fer any thing to bring glory to God, *accounting all things but dung and droſs below Chriſt.* 2. When any thing of the fleſh ariſeth againſt the motions of Gods Spirit to draw me from good, or to do evil, I find frequently the power of the Spirit to ſubdue my heart not to ſubmit to the fleſh, but to walk in his way, and yet I am ſo ſenſible of my infirmities, that all that I do, or can do is nothing, but as filthy rags; but I know Jeſus Chriſt is my Saviour, and ſtands engaged for me, and when the fleſh is weakeſt, I find the Spirit thirſteth after God. 3. I find in my heart a very great thirſting after the Ordinances, and a great enlargment of heart, and comfort in them, my heart being delighted to be among the people of God, and full of joy in them. 4. When thoughts of want at any time ariſe, I find full ſatisfaction in the better part, which never can be taken from me, which is my intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt; And I find in my Conſcience a great teſtimony of my Spiritual union with God, and that I am ſo ſeparated from the world in my affections, that God hath drawn me to himſelf. 5. God who ſearcheth the heart, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, becauſe he maketh interceſſion for the Saints according to the will of God, which will of God I find a free ſubmiſſion to in my heart with joy; knowing, *that all things ſhall work together for good to them that love God.* 6. It is the chiefeſt deſire of my heart that God would keep me cloſe to my duty, and I have abundance of joy in communion with the Lord, which is more ſweet to me, than my joy in any thing elſe. 7. I delight much to ſpeak of God, and of his ways, and to uſe what means I can to comfort the Saints, whom I love dearly, and if poſſible to convert ſinners.

D. M

XIX.

XIX. *Expertences of* Æ. L.

I Had lately great grief upon my ſpirit about a Daughter, which was brought to great ſufferings, and by reaſon of her going away in her affliction, I thought ſhe had made away her ſelf: God put it into my thoughts to remember my ſins; and that he had laid this affliction upon me, for neglecting my duty to him, and not ſerving him as I ought. This cauſed great ſorrow in me, and made me abundantly ſhed tears, my ſins I thought were the occaſion that the Lord made her ſo great a croſs to me, for which I had deſerved it, ſo that both became a great grief to my Soul; and thus I lay languiſhing in very great ſorrow: Then I began to think with my ſelf that there is no refuge but only in Chriſt; and I conſulted my thoughts, how to go to good company and meetings, where I might find comfort from the people of God. And about two years ſince, one morning I came to Mr. *S.* to joyn with godly people that came thither to prayer, though with a great deal of diſtraction in my mind; and I ſhewed my diſcontents and condition to him, and he told me, that if I had but a mind to ſeek God, and to repent, he was gracious, and would receive me to mercy: The thing that I did earneſtly beg of God was, to know Chriſt crucified for me, and he told me, that indeed was beſt of all: And after ſome good inſtructions from him and others, I was much delighted to frequent the meetings of Gods Servants, and good Sermons; and I found many good operations upon my heart. After very ſtrong conflicts, which I had thus for about three quarters of a year, lying in my bed, waking all the night, and calling upon God to direct me to ask at his hands thoſe things which might be for his glory, and my comfort, and begging that he would give me a ſetled heart that might

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not be distracted with the things of the World. In the morning I fell into a slumber, with God still in my thoughts, in which I heard as it were a voice from Heaven speaking to my heart, and saying thus, *Ask of God a perfect upright heart to walk in his presence*; which when I was fully awake, I took to be the motion of Gods Spirit upon my Conscience, which did fill me with much joy, provoking me to pray to the Lord to grant me that grace.

And about two years since, the Lord gave me a sense of my sins in a greater measure than before, and my repentance was more spiritual, and my hatred of sin more real. And I found a sore combate betwixt the flesh and the spirit, being more sensible how I had strayed from the rule of the Gospel, and did yet come short of my duty therein, and it was a great grief to my heart, that I could not live according to that which God had revealed of his will to me. Whilst I was thus troubled in spirit, I heard some things in several Sermons preached by Master *B.* touching the sins of our natural corruptions, and what holiness God repuires of us. And I heard Mr. *C.* shew that we should strive to *enter in at the narrow gate* which wrought in my heart a very great sense of my sins.

In these conflicts I met with many discouragements, and Satan tempted me to despair, but the Lord sustained me. I considered that as a sinner, I deserved nothing but Damnation, but my comfort was in Christ, and my grief was interlaced with comforts: Sometimes I was in sorrow two or three days, and then again found comfort, and often prayed unto the Lord to lay no more weight upon me, then he would give me strength to bear, and I found the Lord to be my shield and buckler, and remembred many promises from the Lord, in which

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to this day, I bleſs God, I have, and ſtill do find much comfort. As Pſal. 34. 19. *Many are the afflictions of the Righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all:* I have had many afflictions for my ſins, but none but Chriſts righteouſneſs is my comfort, in whom I truſt for deliverance. Ezekiel 33. 11. *As I live ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his evil way, and live; turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye dye, O ye houſe of* Iſrael, Matth. 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* Ezekiel 18. 30. *Repent and turn your ſelves from all your tranſgreſſions, ſo iniquity ſhall not be your ruine,* Iſaiah 43. 25. *I, even I am he, that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for my own ſake, and will not remember thy ſins.*

Theſe and divers other promiſes, I praiſe God, I have had comfort from, and as the fruits of my faith, and my love to God, I have theſe Evidences wrought by his Spirit through faith in my heart, as a further manifeſtation of my intereſt in Chriſt. 1. I believe in the Promiſes of the free mercies of God, in the merits of Chriſt, and can apply them with comfort to my own Soul, as mine by faith. 2. My heart and my mind affects God above all the pleaſures and joys in the World, and when I think of the things of the World in relation to God, I think that without God all is but vain and vanity. 3. When I think of my croſſes and afflictions in the World, then I lift up my heart to God in Chriſt, and can ſay: *Having thee, I have all things; if I have Chriſt, I have enough.* 4. My heart rejoyces in duties, and my Soul doth more rejoyce in hearing the Word, than in worldly pleaſures. 5. I have the peace of God upon my conſcience, which is more to me than all things in the world, and

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makes me set the world at naught, and it is my prayer, that I may never be without that peace of God whatever befalls me. 6. The Lord hath given me a contented mind in what condition soever he brings me to, and his Spirit worketh upon my heart, that I do not repine against his will. *E. L.*

XX. *Experiences of* J. B.

SOme time agoe a Child of mine about six years of age, when I have bid him go forth to play, he hath come in again very solitary, because other Children would swear and be rude, I would ask him, *Robert*, what aileth you, why do you not go to play? he would answer, That he had no fellows to play withal, but such as would swear, and the like, and they cannot be (said he) Gods children. I would say, why not Child? then he would say, No Mother, though I am but a little way in my Book, yet I have learnt, that God will not pardon such sins as swearing; I have sometimes said, Yes Child, I hope God will pardon them, else God help thy Father, and God help us all: Then he hath replyed, Mother, with great repentance God can forgive, for his mercies are great; but good Mother, let us forbear that which is evil. And many times I had such conference with that Child, that seeing me troubled about it, he hath said, Good Mother be content, their Parents are such, and they must needs learn after them.

I thought upon my Childs words, and having before often offended God on the Lords Days, and the thoughts of other failings in my conversation, it wrought great trouble upon my heart, so that I was much afflicted in Soul, considering that my Child so young, should give me such instructions, which hath proved a blessing to bring me home to him; I did then make some doubt whether God would forgive me those sins, and about that time hearing

hearing Dr. *Uſher* preach ſeveral Sermons, and particularly upon that Text, That *we are but ſojourners and travellers here*; and ſhewing that we are not at home, therefore we muſt keep on in the ſtreight way to Heaven, and take heed of the broad way, which leadeth to Hell, this and other means ſince, did throw me down low under the ſenſe of ſin, yet not without ſometimes ſome refreſhments. And from a Sermon preached by Dr. *Uſher*, *That the Lord is the ſhield and defence of thoſe that truſt in him*, I had ſome comfortable hopes in the Lords mercies; but I found many doubtings ſtill; yet about ſeven years ſince, Maſter *Tompſon* made a Sermon at *Liverpoole*, then beſieged, ſhewing, *That we muſt lay hold on the Lord, and hold faſt, and he will lead us through all Troubles*; and ſoon after it was loſt, and many were killed, but I bleſs God I had no hurt at all, which did much comfort me that the Lord of his mercy had delivered me; I did, and ſtill do hope, that the Lord had a mind to ſave me, and to draw me nearer to himſelf; which together with ſome other deliverances of the Lords great mercy, I took great comfort in, ſo that when I had ſcarce bread and water, (and I have been ſtreightned ſince) yet I found ſtill comfort from the Lord for my ſelf, and to be an inſtrument to help others, who were priſoners.

And the Lord then, and ſince hath by his Spirit comforted me with ſeveral Promiſes, which I praiſe God I can apply to my ſelf, by which I have a teſtimony of my true belief, ſome of which are theſe which follow, Gen. 15. 1. *The Word of the Lord came unto* Abraham *in a viſion, ſaying, Fear not*, Abraham, *I am thy ſhield, and thy exceeding great reward.* I had found the Lord to be my ſhield in thoſe many deliverances he had wrought

for me, and had taken away that diſtruſtful fear, which before was upon me, and therefore I was, and ſtill am confident he will be my exceeding great reward, Pſal. 119. 57. *Thou art my portion, O Lord, I have ſaid that I would keep thy words.* The ſame God wrought in my heart, to ſay with *David*, that I would keep thy Word, O Lord; and tho I cannot as I ſhould, yet my deſire is to keep it, my mind is to keep it; therefore I preſume with *David* to ſay, *Thou art my portion, O Lord.* John 15. 5. Chriſt ſaith, *I am the Vine, ye are the Branches, he that abideth in me, and I in him, the ſame bringeth forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing.* I know my ſelf to be nothing without Chriſt, and though I have infirmities, yet my heart abides in Chriſt. And therefore I hope to find righteouſneſs, and ſalvation not in my ſelf, but in Chriſt, deſiring alſo that I may bring forth fruit as a branch in him, Rom. 8. 1. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit*: I find my ſelf to be one of thoſe, who walk in my heart in the ways of God, to which I am led by his Spirit, and not after the fleſh, and though I cannot ſerve God ſo well as I would, I do as well as I can; and am troubled in my ſpirit for my failings, and therefore I believe I ſhall never be condemned.

And I have theſe teſtimonies of my converſion, and ſincere love to God, as the fruits of my faith, 1. The Lord hath by his Spirit manifeſted to my Soul, that the *Wiſdom of the Spirit is life and peace*, and hath wrought that peace in my heart, that I do not deſire any way to break from it, for any other enjoyments whatſoever. 2. This I deſire to be built upon, that I may find Chriſt to be my life and peace. 3. I find that the Lord hath great-

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ly wrought upon me, and my mind is fully affected with the Lord, out of whom I do not care for any thing that is in the World. 4. My deſire is wholly to ſerve God, and leave all things in the World as vain trifles for the enjoyment of him. 5. My love is ſo much to God in Chriſt, that having him, I know I have all things, and without him I have nothing. 6. I find that I have great comfort, and am much refreſhed by Ordinances, a ſenſe of the Spirit is frequently brought upon my heart, and I have received a great deal of comfort therein, when I have been weak; and it hath been a refreſhing to me, when food hath been ſcant. And particularly, from ſeveral Sermons preached by Mr. *Woitaker*, Mr. *Marſhal*, Mr. *Carter*, and others, as alſo Mr. *P.* Dr. *Homes*, Mr. *W.* and at other meetings of godly people. 7. I find that the comfort of the Ordinances are more ſweet to me, than all the pleaſures, riches, or friends in the world; for they are contenting comforts, and ſo are not worldly things. 8. I could find in my heart willingly to dye, and leave Children, Brothers, Siſters, and all the World beſides to go to my Chriſt. *J. B.*

XXI. *Experiences of* A. J.

WHen it pleaſed God to call my Huſband from me, I was for a time as exceedingly caſt down, and troubled, as I think any poor creature could be; in which I was ſo overwhelmed, that I did not know which way to turn my ſelf, nor what to do, yet was ſeeking the Lord, to find out what was his mind in the thing: I had loſt a good eſtate, had no body to look after my buſineſs, had many injured me, and had loſt above the reſt a pious Huſband, whom I intirely loved, yet the Lord put it into my heart, that all this was to wean me from my ſins, and too much doting upon

an Husband, and other worldly enjoyments, which my heart was too much taken up with, therefore the Lord was pleased to strip me of them in a great measure, to bring me nearer to himself. I went to divers places to hear several Ministers, and by waiting upon the Ordinances to seek after the Lord, if possible I might find comfort and satisfaction to my Soul herein; but continued in much affliction upon my spirit, for near a years time; at last I heard Master *Jenkins* preaching out of the 21. Chapter of *John* the 18 and 19. verses, *Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thy self, and walkedst whether thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorifie God.* The consideration of which dispensation from God to him, drew forth my heart to be contented with whatsoever the Lord should be pleased to lay upon me: And I was satisfied to suffer or bear any thing, in that it was the Lords will to glorifie himself, by such dispensations towards the Saints. And the Lord hath since made me as he did *David*, to be contented as well with *his Rod, as with his staff*; and then, and since, I praise the Lord, I can say with *David*, *It was well for me that I was afflicted.* I was comforted with that example of ahe woman in the Gospel, to whom it was said by Christ, *that it is not lawful to take the childrens bread, and cast it to dogs*, in that I could say with her, *Truth Lord, but the dogs may lick the crums that fall from their Masters Table*; I remembred Gods dispensations towards *Job* and *David*, and resolved with *Joshua, that I and my house wold serve the Lord.* And although it was a bitter pill to me to bear the cross before, yet now my God hath made it easie; and I praise

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the Lord, through his grace, I can go under it with a great deal of comfort; and he hath now diſcovered to me the way of his working in thoſe things, which before were wonderful ſtrange to me.

Many ſpecial promiſes I found great comfort in, ſome that I remember are theſe that follow,(*viz.*) 1 Pet. 5. 6, 7. *Humble your ſelves therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Caſting all your care on him, for he careth for you.* This promiſe I have found of a truth made good to me in ſome meaſure, I have applyed it often, and have found the comfort of it, 2 Cor. 1. 29. *My grace is ſufficient for thee.* From this place I found much comfort, knowing the fulneſs of ſo glorious a portion, Jam. 1. 2, 3, 4. *Count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the tryal of your faith worketh patience But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and intire, wanting nothing;* This adminiſtred great joy to me againſt all temptations, Iſa. 55. 1. Ho! *every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters of life, and he that hath no mony, come ye, buy and eat.* This gave great comfort to my Soul at ſeveral times, though it was ſo much caſt down.

And that which gives me great content and comfort is, the ſeal of Gods Spirit in my heart, giving evidence of peace in the blood of Chriſt, between God and my Soul, by theſe teſtimonies. 1. My love to God is ſo, that I am confident (if the Lord keep me with his Spirit, which at this time he hath beſtowed upon me) I could be content to part with any thing, or lay down my life for his glory, if he would call me to it. 2. The Lord hath been pleaſed ſo to inrich my Soul with his Spirit, that I loath the things of the World,

when they would draw me in any thing, from ſubmitting to the motions of Gods Spirit in my heart: I once thought nothing could have drawn me from the love of the vain things of the world, but now I do as much diſdain them for God, and more than then I loved them. 3. I deſire to follow Gods Ordinances, and find great enlargments of my heart to God, both to, and in the Ordinances: And particularly from Mr. *S.* Mr. *W.* and others, from whom many things have fallen that have much refreſhed my Soul, and I find my heart in duties to God, more refreſhed than in any thing. 4. I find much peace in my conſcience, becauſe of a free ſubmiſſion which his Spirit hath wrought in my Soul to all the commands of Jeſus Chriſt; and I find comfort in that true circumciſion which is in my heart, wrought by his Spirit. 5. I find every every day ſo great a peace in my Soul, and ſuch comfort in God, that I could be willing, and I bleſs God, find in my ſelf a readineſs to dye every moment.

XXII. *Experiences of* A. A.

ABout two years ſince, my Husband was ſore wounded, which I took as a great tryal, not having above a month to go with Child, and I was troubled at it: And about a quarter of a year after I was up, all my Children were ſick together of the ſmall Pox. Yet all this did not work upon me inwardly ſo ſenſibly as about a month afterwards that one of my Children dyed ſuddenly, when I thought he had been near well, then I ſaid, the *wages of ſin is death*, thinking that the Lord had warned me by Fatherly threatnings before, but I did not hearken to him, and therefore I thought he ſmote me now, by the death of my Child. But yet I could not enter into any particular ſins that God ſhould ſtrike at, only in general, I ſought the

the Lord to lay open my ſins to me; I was very much troubled, that the Lord took my child ſo ſuddenly from me, but was comforted by Mr. *Strong*, in ſome Sermons preached from the words the Church to *Paul*, going to ſuffer at *Jeruſalem*, Acts 21. 14. *When he would not be perſwaded, we ceaſed, ſaying, The will of the Lord be done.* So I was ſetled pretty well in my thoughts, till ſuddenly the Lord ſtruck the elder of my two Children then living, which was a Boy, my other, which is a Girl, I did not ſo much value, but now I do, and know Gods mercy in ſparing her, but my Child that then dyed was the chief comfort that my heart was fixed upon in this world, which was ſo great a grief to me, that I have ſlept few nights quiet, I deſired to know the mind of God, what he would do with me; Sometimes I ſhould have diſpaired through great buffetings inwardly, but that the Lord ſuſtained me. Sometimes I thought that the wrath of God was kindled againſt me, thinking never to have comfort in this world again. But bleſſed be the Lord for it, he hath often comforted me in this, that I have thought he did it in love to me; yet ſometimes I have feared that I ſhould deſpair, and that the hand of God was againſt me in it, having been troubled with thoughts, that I was the death of my children.

Thus I have been between hope and diſpair, and could not find what the Will of God was in it towards me: And I had fears that the hand of God was ſtill againſt me, for further puniſhment, becauſe I have had many temptations upon me, in low thoughts of God. But I have gone to prayer, and deſired the Lord to deliver me, and diſcover his mind to me, in every thing that I do, and have found a willingneſs to part with any thing, even to cut off a limb, or any thing if I could find

out, what it was: And I bleſs God I have found a good ſpirit reſiſting the bad. Yet I have been under much fear, that I was not a child of God. But it hath pleaſed God to comfort me in this, that *Pauls* life was ſubject to temptations, therefore I had hope and caſt my ſelf upon the mercies of God, reſolving that if I *periſh*, *I periſh*, never daring to offend willingly in any thing, that I know to be a ſin; yet I know I am a wretched ſinner, but I humbly deſire to do the will of God, ſo far as I am able. And in that I can ſay with *David*, Pſal. 42. 1. *As the heart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God.* I find comfort with him to ſay, *Why art thou caſt down, O my Soul? and why art thou diſquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, for the help of his countenance*, verſe 5. And *I will look unto the Lord*, with the Prophet *Micha*, *I will wait for the God of my Salvation, my God will hear me*, Mich. 7. 7. And I have found much comfort in applying ſeveral promiſes to my Soul. As *Matth.* 5. 4. Chriſt ſaith, *Bleſſed are they that mourn, for they ſhall be comforted*: As God hath given me a mourning Spirit for my ſins, ſo I believe that in his time I ſhall be comforted, and I have taſted I bleſs God, of the comforts of his Spirit in my Soul. *Iſaiah* 55. 1. The Lord ſaith, *Ho! every one that thirſteth come ye to the waters, and he that hath no mony, come ye, buy, and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without mony, and without price.* As the Lord hath made my Soul to thirſt for him, ſo I doubt not but to find him. And the Lord ſays, *Ezek.* 33. 11. *As I live, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live*; I thank God, my heart and ſoul is turned from all things, and is only after the Lord. And in a ſpecial manner, I have found ſweet evidences of my faith and intereſt in

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God through Chriſt; I had lately much comfort from a Sermon preached by Mr. *Strong*, who ſhewed that afflictions did not make us low in the ſight of God, though before men; as alſo from the words at a conference by Mr. *V. That in the World we ſhall have tribulations; but in God reſt.* And 1. I do clearly find that my love is more ſet upon God than upon any thing. 2. I could more willingly leave the world now, than ever before, and I could willingly dye, if God ſaw it good, in the mind I am. 3. I find in my heart that I do ſo caſt my ſelf upon God, that I have peace with him. 4. In times of doubtings, I find comfort that I have a God to call upon and I find much peace in my mind in returns from God. 5. I do always find when any evil thoughts ariſe, a power from God which ſubdues them, ſo that I never willingly give way to them. 6. I find my affections ready to go forth both to duties, and in duties to God; and when I come to them with little affection, yet I bleſs God I find a great deal of comfort uſually before I go away. 7. I find the moſt comfort to my ſpirit is, when I am weeping for my infirmities, or at prayer, or duties, in publick or private, and methinks I find ſuch joy in them, that I could dwell there, having no comfort in the world like that. 8. I find in my heart a real love to all if any have wronged me, Ide ſire no revenge, but that I may be at peace with all.

9. Whatſoever I find to be a truth from God and a motion of his Spirit, I find in my ſoul a willingn ſubmitting to it *A. A.*

XXIII *Experiences of* E. C.

ABout 16. years of Age, though I did not underſtand the Word, yet I had a great deſire to go to hear, becauſe they ſerved God therin that did ſo, knowing that there is a God that ought to be ſerved.

And I ſat in corners ſtudying what way I might come to God if I ſhould dye; having a very great affection wrought by the Lord upon my ſpirit; praying as well as I could, that my ſelf, and my Father, and Mother, and Friends, might go to God when we dye. And I was very much ſet upon duties, thinking to find God there; but afterwards lived in a Family, where I was much hindred from the Ordinances, or partaking of any thing of God, which was a great grief unto me. Yet ſometimes I had thoughts towards worldly things, pondering how to be rich, or fine as others, but God wrought in my heart a remorſe to check thoſe temptations. And frequently the Lord laid ſome affliction or other upon me to wean me the more from ſuch vain thoughts, which brought my heart into a very ſad condition many times; and ſometimes I have wept day and night; And at other times, through grief that I could not ſorrow enough, I have fallen into a great meaſure of weeping.

After, I had lived in ſeveral other Families, where I had little comfort; About twenty years ſince, hearing Mr. *F.* and Mr. *P.* on Lords-days, I was much comforted, and alſo by Mr. *Marſhall*, and others: and from the conſideration of the Love of God in Chriſt, and the ſufferings of Chriſt for us, as alſo of the Woman that did but by Faith touch the hem of Chriſts garment, how ſhe was comforted and healed, and I had much comfort in private meetings. But about five years ſince, ſeeing my other Neighbours many of them flouriſh and proſper in the World more than I, I began to doubt that I did but play the Hypocrite, and that perhaps they did pray more at home than I, though I knew ſome of them went leſs to the publick Ordinances, I was very much troubled at this, and thought with my ſelf, Lord, ſhall I ſtill lye at the Pool, and find

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no body to put me in, that I may be healed? and I was much troubled because many of my Neighbours hated me for frequenting private meetings. And for above a month I spent much time in private prayer, and often in the night upon my Bed, and went to hear only on the Lords-days. But then I had thoughts upon me, that it was not pleasing to God to pray unto him upon a soft Bed. Then the Lord put it in my heart, that he had promised, *That where two or three are met together in my name, that I will be in the midst of them*: This caused me to go again, as I had done before, to hearing of Sermons on week-days. But still I found many reasonings and doubtings upon my spirit, whether I was elected or not, and was much cast down many times about it, and had some temptations to despair, fearing that such a sinner as I, could not be saved. Yet I had comfort in this, that though I was a sinner, God by his Spirit had mortified me. And though I am not so good as I should be, yet through the power of grace, I am not so bad as the flesh would be; and finding much of the testimony of Gods Spirit upon my heart, I had great hope that I had marks and tokens of my believing.

One night (having for about half a years time before used to go to Bed before I prayed) being in Bed, and thinking to pray to God, I had strange temptations upon me, to put God out of my mind, and I could not speak a word, nor scarce think of God, and if I did in some intervals, I could not name God, or Christ, nor speak a word to God for the present. And Satan then seemed to appear to me in a most ugly shape, laughing and jeering at me, which did much affright me, and I feared that I had played the Hypocrite with God, and now should run mad, to make good what some had

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reproachfully caſt upon me, that I was an Hypocrite and I was riſing out of my Bed, but it pleaſed the Lord to put it into my mind, that Chriſt Jeſus hath not given ſo much for Souls, as he hath done, to let the Devil have them for nothing. And in the ſtrength of the Lord I repulſed the Devil, ſaying, 'Satan, when thou in tempting Chriſt 'ſhewedſt him the whole World, thou promiſedſt 'him that which was none of thine own; nor am 'I thine, and therefore avoid Satan, for thou haſt 'nothing to do with me, and then the Devil de-'parted from me.

Then my heart was much filled with the thoughts of the goodneſs of God, and with a mixture of tears and joy, I had ſweet comforts from the Lord. And though I have had many doubts upon my ſpirit ſometimes, yet I have ſince found very great conſolation through Faith in the promiſes of God, as in theſe, and divers others, *Matth.* 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* I thank God I have found much reſt and refreſhment by coming to Chriſt, and that *his grace is ſufficient for me.* Matth. 5. 6. *Bleſſed are they which do hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs, for they ſhall be filled.* I have often laid hold on this promiſe with a thirſting deſire after Jeſus Chriſt, and he hath filled me with comfort, And the comfort wherewith Chriſt did comfort *Peter*, bidding him not to *fear*, *for he had prayed for him*, hath been upon my ſpirit, and given me great conſolation, in that I know Chriſt is heard in all that he prayeth to the Father. And I find the Teſtimonies of my Converſion to God, which give ſatisfaction to my Soul, that I am a true Believer.

1. Though I do all that I can to ſerve God, as he hath commanded me, yet I find great imperfection, and utter unworthineſs in my ſelf to deſerve

ſerve any thing of God. But my whole dependance and hope of Salvation is in Gods free grace in the blood and merits of my Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. 2. I do find that the Love of God in Chriſt conſtrains me to love God again, above all things in the World, and whatever I am about, my Soul is delighted with God above all. 3. I find that the Lord draws my heart to hate all evil communication and evil things, and not ſo much to fear the puniſhment of the World for any thing, as to ſin againſt God. 4. I am much delighted in the workings of Gods Spirit, and it is a great joy and comfort to my Soul, when my heart is inlarged towards God. 5. My heart is much affected unto Ordinances and if Satan ſuggeſted worldly thoughts to hinder me from duties, I have called upon God, and found comfort, and when I have come to duties with cold affections, I have been much refreſhed in the duties, & though ſometimes I have felt pain and diſtemper in my body, which I have thought Satan hath done to make me weary in duties, yet I have called on the Lord, and found comfort. 6. I find great peace and much comfort in the Lord, ſo that I could be willing to dye, and it is a great joy to me, in that I expect to dye, that I may be delivered from the afflictions of the World, to enter into eternal joy with Chriſt for ever. *E. O.*

XXIV. *Experiences of* A. G.

I Have been many years ſince very ſenſible of my Natural Eſtate, and did lye long under the ſence of my ſins, which were ſo great a burden to me, that they made me almoſt deſpair, inſomuch that I could ſcarce either eat or drink, but had my ſpirits dried up with the anguiſh thereof. For I was brought up under the Means, and from a Child frequented the hearing of the Word. And the firſt

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cauſe of my great torment was, for that I once told a Lye againſt my Conſcience, which ſo lay upon my ſpirit afterwards, that I could receive no comfort; I went to hear the Word, and read the Scriptures, yet all did but increaſe my horrour.

Several Miniſters and godly People uſed great means to comfort me, but all in vain for a time; and when I read the Scriptures, I found every threatning and judgment therein, that I fixed my thoughts upon, to ſpeak terrour to my Soul; and my diſtraction was ſo great, that my Friends ſaid I was mad, and kept the Bible from me. For ſo often as I read in it, I pored moſt upon that dreadful place, *Matth.* 12. 31. *All manner of ſin and blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven unto men, but the blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt ſhall not be forgiven unto men.* I did not know what the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt was, but I had a perſwaſion I had committed that ſin, and feared that my ſins could not be pardoned, and that I ſhould never go to Heaven, but was caſt off to the damned. Yet this the Lord wrought for me, and in me, by his bleſſed Spirit, to draw forth my heart to be often praying in that poor doubting way my ſpirit could, by the Lords aſſiſtance vouchſafed to me, attain unto; for though I thought it in vain, and that God would not hear me, yet I continued praying, and often cryed to God, not only in the day time, but frequently in the night, and riſe out of my Bed to pray to God to have mercy upon me. And I was ſometimes a little comforted, in that I was perſwaded to hope in the Lord, but yet it was daſhed again through fear that I had committed the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. And I thought that all victuals, and every thing, was too good for me, and that I was unworthy of all enjoyments: Thus I lay for ſome months in a ſad Agony wraſtling with temptations

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But at laſt in hearing Mr. *W.* Miniſter of *B.* and reading a Book called *The New Birth*, I found comfort, being better ſatisfied what the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt was than before, ſince which I bleſs God, I have for ſome years paſt, found much comfort from the Promiſes of God revealed in his holy Word, ſome of which follow. *Matth.* 5. 6. *Bleſſed are they which do hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs, for they ſhall be filled.* My chief deſires are after Jeſus Chriſt, and to follow him by the Rule of the Goſpel, not doubting but that I ſhall be bleſſed in that grace which he communicates to me from his fulneſs. *Matth.* 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* This promiſe being to Souls laden with dejections, and univerſal, to all that come to Chriſt, hath much comforted my heart, in that by his Spirit he hath drawn forth my Soul to come to him. And as a teſtimony of my love to God, and evidences of my faith, I bleſs God I have theſe comfortable fruits of the Spirit of grace in my Soul.

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and have a real and hearty respect to his Commandments, and to do justly to all, and do find my heart chiefly drawn forth to holiness, and in all things to keep a good Conscience, and live in the fear of God. *A. O.*

XXV. *Experiences of* M. M.

I Have many times had a desire to hear the Word of God, when imployed about my Calling; But I then thought to my self, that I had no body to provide for me, but if God would bestow on me so much of these outward things, as upon others in the World, then I would spend more time in hearing, praying, and reading the Word. And accordingly, as these outward things have ebbed or flowed, so hath my joy been less or more. But now God hath given me a sight of my sins, and why I had formerly no comfort, it was because I had not faith in my heart. Before God wrought that in me, instead of making use of those comforts which the Word holds forth, I spent my time in mistrusting Gods providence, who therefore justly during that time, held the sence of his spiritual consolations from me. Sometimes I was in despair (so low) that I could not apprehend any thing to be my portion but Hell. Every thing that fell not out according to my mind, I thought was a Judgment from God upon me. Yet I afterwards got comfort by these inviting promises, *Isa.* 55. 1. *Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy, and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price.* And *Ezek.* 33. 11. *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: Turn ye, turn ye from you evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

I had some comfort from these promises, but no

no assurance, my thoughts were various, and tho' between hope and despair, yet I resolved to go to God, knowing that he is unchangeable, and that whom he *loves, he loves to the end, and that if a sinner doth repent and turn to him, he will blot all his sins and iniquities out of his remembrance.* And it pleased God to bring this promise into my mind, and to help me by faith to lay hold on it, and apply it to my self, Ezek. 18. 21, 22. *If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not dye: All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him; in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.* And Christ saith, Joh. 3. 16. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* And this is life eternal, to know God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

I bless God he hath made me now to believe, not only in word, but to labour to bring forth the fruits thereof in a godly life and conversation. 2. I cannot but admire the free love of God to me, that though I have given ear formerly to the Devil, and to the world, and to my own wicked heart; yet God hath been thus pleased now to call me out of darkness into his most marvellous light. 3. God hath been pleased to give me faith to believe, that though sin hath abounded in me, yet grace shall now much more abound; This makes me to see the free love of God without any desert in the creature. 4. I have formerly gone about to limit God, and to be upon tearms with him, that if he would give me so much of these worldly things as I thought needful, then I would spend more time in those duties which he hath commanded me. But this is

contrary

contrary to the Word of God, which teacheth me now, *First, to seek the Kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, knowing that all other things shall be added to me that I want.* 5. And now blessed be God, he hath made me to believe this, and all other promises, so that I can by faith call God my Father, who hath promised me that *All things shall work together for good to me*, because I love him. 6. I have found something from God, of hope of mercy, since I was a faithful hearer of the word; though the Devil did before tempt me with objections to drive me to despair for sin. 7. I am now, I praise my God, comforted, in believing that God will not mention my sins against me, Christ dyed for sinners, and the ungodly; and I know that although I have been a great sinner, yet this hinders me not from laying hold on the promises. 8. I do believe, that the *Life I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God*; I see by faith, that Christ hath satisfied Gods justice for my sins in particular, and hath bid me to reckon my self in him. 9. Now being spiritually married to Christ, all the priviledges of Saints and Believers belong to me. And I can say, *All is mine, and I am Christs, and Christ is Gods*; *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God that hath justified me, Who is he that shall condemn me? being now justified by Faith in Christ, I have peace with God.* 10. I know when this earthly Tabernacle *is dissolved, I shall have an abiding not made with hands, but eternal in the Heavens*; for Christ saith, *I am gone to prepare a place for you*, that is, for me, and all Believers. 10. All the promises of God in Christ, are spoken to believers, and by faith I believe they are made to me, and because he lives, I shall live also; Now Christ *hath made me free, I am free indeed.* 11. Christ hath done all for me, only bids me to believe

believe, which faith by his Spirit he hath wrought in me. 12. I have formerly been ſtirred up to hear, pray, and read upon ſelfiſh conſideration of fear, that otherwiſe I ſhould go to Hell. And I am aſhamed to think how I have choſen rather to believe what the Devil hath ſaid, than what God hath ſaid. But bleſſed be the Lord, I now ſee it is free love that he forgiveth iniquity, tranſgreſſions, and ſins, only becauſe mercy pleaſeth him; all that I can do cannot. 13. I am guilty before Gods juſtice in my ſelf, both by original ſin which came by the fall of *Adam*, and much more by thoſe many actual ſins, which I have perſonally committed, but I am juſtified by Chriſt. 14. I deſire to ſhew my dutiful love in obedience to my Fathers commands, and my affections according to the rule of the Goſpel to Chriſt my Husband, with whom I am ſpiritually marryed. 15. The Lord ſaith, *Come out from amongſt them all ye my people; and be ye ſeparated, and touch no unclean thing, and I will be your God, and ye ſhall be my people. And if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayers.* I take God to witneſs, who knows the ſecrets of all hearts, that I deſire to joyn in duties, not to the end that others ſhould have a good opinion of me: I know I muſt leave all worldly relations, how ſoon I know not; but herein, I ſhall have peace, that I do as my Father hath commanded me; and I rejoyce in Chriſt Jeſus, putting no confidence in the fleſh, but only in the merits of my Saviour. *M. M.*

XXVI. *Experiences of* H. W.

WHen my God appeared through his grace, to ſhine by his ſacred Spirit into my dark Soul, my thoughts were much taken up in conſideration of my ſad and deplorable condition under the curſe by nature, yet ſo, that I did withal ſee enough in Chriſt

Christ to deliver me from all, if I did attain to a true belief. But my perplexed Soul drank deep of the bitter dreggs of a sorrowful cup, before I could taste of the sweet cordials my blessed Saviour had prepared for me, wherewith I have since been often refreshed. My conscience told me, that if I ever expected deliverance from sin, death, and hell, and to have favour with God, I must devote my heart to him alone. But yet I found the love of some worldly vanities rooted so fast in my affections, that I did often put God off, and had an eye to some worldly contents, which deprived me (for that time) of enjoying peace in his presence. 'I often said, Lord, such a day I will leave 'all, and never seek my self, but thy glory in all 'things; and then again, Lord, after such a merry 'meeting, then I will shake hands with all temporal delights; and again, now Lord once more, 'I will have but one day of pleasure, and then I 'will part with all that offends thee, and not 'seek after any thing out of thee more. But for a time all this proved but unfaithfulness to my Saviour, and wounds to my own Spirit, the sense whereof did sadly terrifie my conscience. My Soul was much cast down, and I sat up a great part of many nights, when all the Family, where I then lived, was in bed, and with an heavy heart, and floods of tears gushing from my sorrowful eyes, I was exceedingly disquieted, pouring forth mine heart to my God, and begging mercy at the foot-stool of the Throne of grace.

And that which was the greatest horror upon my Spirit was, that I could not manifest my believing by a pious spiritual conversation in a faithful obedience, according to the sacred rule of the Gospel. When I have had resolutions for worldly pleasures to satisfie the desires of nature, it hath taken

taken away the comfort of my heart from ſpiritual duties in the interim. But I found in my Soul a great conflict in wraſtling againſt thoſe ſad temptations, my conſcience convincing me how great an enemy I was to my Soul therein, and teſtifying that it would be infinitely better to leave all the vain things of the world, than to live without the love of my Saviour. But when my God was pleaſed to bring my heart to a frame to reſolve ſeriouſly never to delay with God a moment more, my heart was ſo fixed on my Saviour, that I ſaw a ſufficiency in him under any diſpenſation: I taſted a greater ſweetneſs in the graces of his Spirit, than in any temporal pleaſure. And I found much of the love, grace, ſpirit, and power of my dear Saviour appearing to refreſh my troubled Soul.

And I have found much comfort from divers promiſes of the Lord, and particularly, Iſa. 49.8, 9. *I will preſerve thee, and give thee for a Covenant of the people to eſtabliſh the earth, and to cauſe to inherit the deſolate heritages. That thou mayeſt ſay to the Priſoners, go forth, to them that are in darkneſs, ſhew your ſelves.* Though I was before a Priſoner to worldly vanities, and ſhut up in darkneſs, yet Chriſt being ſent to declare the Covenant to ſuch, I found good warrant to apply it to my ſelf, Ezek. 34. 22. *Therefore will I ſave my flock, and they ſhall be no more a prey:* This Salvation, I applyed as promiſed to me, conſidering, that though I was a ſinful man, yet it was my comfort that the Lord was my God; verſ. 31. *And ye my flock, the flock of my paſture, are men, and I am your God,* Mat. 5. 6. *Bleſſed are they which do hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs, for they ſhall be filled.* God having given me an heart to hunger and thirſt after my Saviour and my God above all things, I believe this promiſe was made to me, with many more, which

gave

gave much ſweet comfort and conſolation to my Soul.

And being juſtified by faith, I have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the teſtimony of which faith is ſealed to my Soul by his bleſſed Spirit in theſe Demonſtrations. 1. I find many evident teſtimonies of the love of God to me, which hath drawn forth my Soul to an high eſteem of him, and to love him above all things. 2. I ſee nothing but ſin in my ſelf, and my truſt is in my Saviours merits for juſtification. 3. I feel glorious refreſhments from the heavenly gales of Gods bleſſed Spirit, breathing his grace into my Soul, which is the higheſt bliſs I can deſire on this ſide Heaven. 4. I find much comfort from the Word and Ordinances. 5. My chief deſire in all thsngs is to glorifie God. 6. I find a very great affection in my heart to the people of God, or any that I judge ſo to be. 7. I deſire to be at peace with, and do all the good I can to all, eſpecially *thoſe of the houſhold of Faith.* 8. I can heartily beg of the Lord to give me deliverance from, and ſtrength againſt every ſin, though never ſo pleaſing to my nature, or which I am moſt prone to. 9. I find no ſuch full joy in any thing, as I do in communicn with my God. 10. I ſee a purity and glory in the ways of God, and Goſpel-duties above all things. 11. Ideſire no longer to live than to glorifie God. 12. All the days of my appointed time, I wait till my change ſhall come. *H. W.*

XXVII. *Experiences of* D. R.

IT hath pleaſed the Lord ever ſince I knew a difference between good and evil, to give me a heart to ſeek after thoſe things which ſavoured moſt of God. And it was my delight always to frequent the ſociety of thoſe whom I thought were truly godly: And upon this account, I thought my

my ſelf to be ſomething, when being ſeriouſly weighed, I became nothing; for I knew God but as a natural man doth, even by way of diſcourſe; I being, as I conceive ſince, much in the poſture of the proud Phariſee, I could ſay, I thank God, I was not ſuch a perſon, as was given to lewdneſs, or vice, as others were: And being thus in my natural condition, I thought I had need of nothing, when I was as the Church of the *Laodiceans, wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked*, and that which was worſt, I knew not that I was thus in ignorance, walking in darkneſs till the Lord brought me forth into the light; Firſt, By convincing me of ſin. Secondly, Convincing me of righteouſneſs. The firſt was (according to my remembrance) about ſeven or eight years ſince.

I being in diſcourſe with a friend, concerning ſomething which did much diſpleaſe me, wherein my anſwering was very croſs, and my words very full of anger, I began to eſpy my ſelf full of malice and envy, which did much reflect upon my own heart, and cauſed a wonderful grief unto me; and having never taken notice of any ſuch thing before, it was ſo much the more ſtrange to me; but calling my ſelf to a ſtrict examination what foundation I had laid, when the Building began to prove ſo rotten, it pleaſed the Lord, that thereby I grew more and more ſenſible of my own miſerable condition, as being in the ſtate of nature, a child of wrath, finding my ſelf a lump of ſin and uncleanneſs, and at a far diſtance from the ways of God, and to be in probability of nothing ſo much as of damnation, and ready to be caſt into Hell for my ſins, finding my ſelf out of Chriſt, and not any hope that I ſhould ever gain an intereſt in him; for I ſaw that without *Faith it was impoſſible to pleaſe him*, and that without Faith I could not

not think of any way to pleaſe him being loſt in falſe ways of my own invention. And conſidering alſo, that *Paul* counſels the *Corinthians* to *examine themſelves whether they were in the faith*, and (ſaith he) *Know ye not your own ſelves, whether Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be Reprobates*, and following this courſe, I could not otherwiſe judge, but that I was a Reprobate, and this condition was very burthenſom unto my ſpirit, and neither in hearing or reading, could I for the time find any eaſe of this my trouble, bnt ſtill I did apprehend the Lord as an angry Judge, requiring ſatisfaction of me for my ſins.

Thus I languiſhed, not knowing which way to ſteer my thoughts; but oftentimes crying out to the throne of grace, what ſhall I do to be ſaved? Sometimes I ſhould perſwade my ſelf it was altogether impoſſible for me to think of being ſaved, or ever to gain ſo much faith, as to believe that Chriſt dyed for my ſins, for I thought it would be a very great preſumption in me to attempt any ſuch thing, having often had thoughts of deſtroying my ſelf. It is my deſire that I may never forget the providence of God in keeping me from all dangers in this my extream doubtful condition, wherein I made not any one acquainted with my trouble but the Lord, whoſe work it was to deliver me. In this my ſpiritual bondage, when I have heard godly men incouraging poor Souls to believe in Chriſt, I have thought that others might, but I durſt not preſume, becauſe I was no better qualified; for if I could find my ſelf more holy, or more godly, or fuller of goodneſs, then there would be ſome hope that I might believe, and hope for the favour of God, and that Chriſt dyed for me.

But afterwards, God put into my heart to conſider,

fider, that ſeeing *By the deeds of the Law, no fleſh can be juſtified*; (for I thought before, I muſt have done ſomething that ſhould have proved meritorious) and beginning to be acquainted with an emptineſs in my ſelf, and an inability of my own to do any good, and find that it muſt be given me from the Lord, Chriſt being *all in all* to the Saints. Upon this conſideration I caſt my ſelf upon God, ſaying, *Lord, I am thy workmanſhip, do with me what ſeemeth good unto thee: If thou doſt damn me, I have deſerved the ſevereſt of thy judgments; thou art juſt, although I am for ever juſtly miſerable.* And one day reading of Mr. *Perkins* his Book, treating of the ſmalleſt degree of ſaving-faith, which did expreſs, that a *deſire to believe was faith it ſelf*, I was ſomething comforted to hear of this, knowing that none could more deſire it than I did. and upon this, a while, I reſted ſatisfied: But not long after I found it a reed, whereon I had leaned, and grew again very reſtleſs, and was beat off from this ſtay by having the opportunity of another Book, which made me to underſtand that the poor man knew full well that a deſire to be rich, and to be rich indeed, were two ſeveral things: And ſo a deſire to believe, and faith it ſelf, was not the ſame. For as all that deſire to be rich, are not rich, ſo all that deſire to believe, do not believe.

Being thus drove from my other principle, I began to ſee a more emptineſs in the creature, and a greater fulneſs in the Creatour. And this laſt book by the bleſſing of God, through his grace did inform my judgment in many things, which were very comfortable to me. As that the love of God was the cauſe Chriſt was given for ſinners, and that he became a full ſatisfaction to God for ſins, and if we ſtaid from Chriſt till we were full of good works

it might be a ſymptom we ſhould never believe: For it ſhewed that we muſt be ingrafted into Chriſt by faith, before we could bring forth good fruits, for *without me ye can do nothing*, ſaith Chriſt, *And whatſoever is not of faith, is ſin*, Theſe and many ſuch like expreſſions in the Scripture, which God put into my mind, were very comfortable to the refreſhing of my dull and weary ſpirit many times; but yet fears in intervals poſſeſſed me, as not finding Chriſt to be made mine by Faith. For I could not ſay (in particular) that God was my God, nor ſee that there was a reconcilement made between God and my Soul. Sometimes I would perſwade my heart to venture to believe in Chriſt for the pardon of my ſins; But preſently objections would thwart my reſolutions, by concluding that I was too great a ſinner: And it was not abſolutely ſaid, that Chriſt dyed for me.

In this condition I was for about four years, before I did thoroughly apprehend the love of God in Chriſt Jeſus unto me: Yet the Lord was pleaſed at laſt, to work effectually upon me, by many ſweet promiſes out of his Word, which did wonderfully rejoyce my Soul, As John 13.15, 16. *Whoſoever believeth in the Son ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life*: This very word *whoſoever*, did work ſo kindly, and with ſuch a ſweet efficacy upon my heart, that I was conſtrained to ſubmit, having *not any objection* againſt it, for it comprehended all ſorts of ſinners, although never ſo great, yet *whoſoever believeth in this Son* of God, ſhall injoy ſuch a ſweet promiſe, no leſs than eternal *life*. In the 16. verſe. *God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* And in Acts 10. 43. *That whoſoever believeth in him, ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins.* Then in Gal. 2. 20. *I*

live

live by the faith of the Son of God *who loved me, and gave himself for me*; and *Christ Jesus dyed for sinners, of whom I am chief:* Seeing this application of Christ, that *Paul* made in particular to himself, who was a very great sinner, it did much imbolden me in the like, Rom. 5. 8, 9. *God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ dyed for the ungodly*: and I was ungodly, therefore I believed Christ dyed for me, *and when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ dyed for sinners*; I am a sinner, and therefore Christ dyed for me, and *he was reconciled unto us, while we were enemies*; For the Lord to be thus reconciled to ungodly, to sinners, to enemies, this was more love indeed than ever I expected: Especially, that the Lord would have been half so gracious to me: This turned all my former sorrows into joy; crying out, *what shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits that he hath bestowed upon me: For what was I, or any of my Fathers house, that the Lord should be so merciful unto me?*

And I have these testimonis of my real conversion to God. 1. The testimony of his spirit adopting me to be his child, Gal. 3. 4, 5. *God sent forth his Son to redeem those that are under the Law, that they may receive the adoption of Sons. And because you are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father; wherefore thou art no more a servant but a Son*: I was once under the law dead, I am now by Christ redeemed. And I bless God for this precious priviledge, that I can call God my Father. 2. Christ hath fulfilled the law, therefore I shall not be condemned by the Law, but justified by Jesus Christ, without the deeds of the Law; there was a time when I was dead in sin, and in ungodliness, being *alienated from the Common-wealth of* Israel, *and a stranger to*

the Covenant of grace, having no hope, and without God in the world: But being made alive by Jesus Christ, I see my sins done away; and do believe that Christ hath born on his body all my sins, he being *bruised for our transgressions*, Isa. 53. And the Lord laid on him *the iniquity of us all, by whose stripes we are healed: So* that I do believe that by *one offering he hath perfected for ever all those that are sanctified*, Heb. 10. And that Christ Jesus is become a full and perfect satisfaction for my sins, and that the Lord is well pleased with, and contented in this satisfaction, Mat. 3. *That is my well-beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.*

3. I am in and through Gods free grace, what I am; not for any thing in me, or that I could do, but as in Titus 4. 5. *We our selves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, serving divers lusts; but when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared towards man, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us: That being justified freely by his grace, we should be made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life*: And in another place, 1 Tim. 1. 9. *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace in Christ Jesus, before the world began*; Therefore I believe, that God the Father loveth me in Jesus Christ, 1 John 4. 19. *We love him because he loved us first*, John 14. 14 *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, that you should bring forth much fruit.* Isa. 43. 25. *I, even I am he that blotteth out all thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy iniquities*, and he will have mercy, even because he will have mercy: The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sins, I plainly see it is the Lords doings, and it is marvellous in my eyes. As in Ephes. 2. *You who were dead in trespasses and sins, hath*

hath he quickned together with him, by Grace ye are saved, and that not of your selves, it is the gift of God. I find as Christ Jesus was a free gift to me, and for me, so was this saving grace of faith a free gift also from the Lord to my Soul, Rom. 3. 24. *Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth* in Jesus; so that all boasting of the creature is excluded by the law of faith. *As by the disobedience of one, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.*

4. I believe, that as there was no sin found in Christ, and yet a sinner by imputation, so I being a sinner indeed, shall be made righteous by Gods imputation; For it pleased God to make him *become sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

5. I have the seal of the spirit, as *Paul* saith, *The spirit of God beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God, and if children, then Heirs of God, and joynt heirs with Christ* in this our freedom.

6. *I* do believe that God the Father loved me, and elected me for the Son to redeem, and that Jesus Christ loves me, as given of the Father for him to redeem, and manifests it to me: And the Holy Ghost loves me, as elected of the Father, and redeemed by the Son, and doth evidence it in me, which is the earnest of my inheritance; and there is an expression in *John* 3. last. *He that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life.*

7. I do believe that I have everlasting life already in possession. 1. By the Promise, *Fear not little flock, for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you a Kingdom.* 2. In the first fruits, for what is

heaven hereafter, but a more full injoyment of what is begun here? What we receive now, is but a taſt of what we ſhall receive; As 1 John 4. 2. *Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be, but we know that when we ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* 3. I do injoy it by my head Chriſt, who hath taken full poſſeſſion of it already for me: Therefore ſeeing I am not my own, I am bought with a price, therefore I deſire to glorifie God with my Soul and Body, which are the Lords, ſaying with *Mary* in Luke 1. *My Soul doth magnifie the Lord, and my Spirit doth rejoyce in God my Saviour, who hath regarded the low eſtate of his handmaid.*

8. Though formerly my foundation was built upon the ſands, and therefore eaſily overthrown: Yet now I truſt in the Lord I am eſtabliſhed by Faith, built upon that Rock, which is the love of God, my Saviour Chriſt being the corner ſtone, Iſa. 28. 16. *Behold I lay in Zion a ſtone, a tryed ſtone, he that believeth ſhall not make haſt.*

9. I wait upon the Will of my Heavenly Father in all his diſpenſations, for a more full injoyment of Jeſus Chriſt in my Soul, which I do hunger and thirſt after, and I have the promiſe of my God that I ſhall be filled, and having taſted, I have found the Lord is gracious, and more to be deſired than thouſands of Worlds.

10. I believe not upon others words, but as in *John* 4. 42. as ſome ſaid to the Woman of *Samaria. Now we believe, not becauſe of thy ſaying, for we have heard him our ſelves, and know that this is indeed the Chriſt the Saviour of the World.*

11. As *David* ſaith, *I had fainted unleſs I had believed to ſee the goodneſs of the Lord,* and *I believe, therefore have I ſpoken, for I was greatly afflicted.*

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As the Apoſtle ſaith, *ye are compleat in Chriſt*, therefore I reckon my ſelf in him.

12. The Lord having cleared it to me, that I am a believer, I am confident that Chriſt Jeſus did pray to his Father for me, in the 17. of *John*, ſaying, *I pray not for theſe only, but for them that ſhall believe through their word, that they may be one, even as we are one*, therefore thou art my God, and I will praiſe thee, for thou haſt heard me, and art become my ſalvation.

Thus in ſome meaſure I have weakly hinted out a reaſon of the hope that is in me, truſting in my God, that as he hath taken away the guilt of ſin out of my conſcience, ſo in his due time he will take away all ſin from my converſation; as he hath given me a pardon for ſin, ſo he will over-power all my corruptions, that I may live more to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made me accepted in the Beloved, and that I ſhall become (over ſin, Satan, ſelf, and all things oppoſite to grace) more than a Conqueror through him that hath loved me, and waſhed me from my ſins in his blood; for to him are all things poſſible, and he is the wiſe Maſter-Builder, who will not only begin, but will go on to accompliſh his own work. *D. R.*

XXVIII. *Experiences of* A. O.

I Have undergone ſad troubles of ſpirit for my ſins, which I have had a great ſight and ſenſe of and ſhed many tears for, and deſire to be truly ſorry for them, and hate them, and to have no more communion with them.

About two years I lay under very great temptations, and was ready to deſpair, and for ſeveral nights could not take any reſt in my bed; but was very weak with weeping and much grieved for my evil thoughts, yet the Lord drew forth my

heart to call upon him, and hope in him for mercy. But I had many sore conflicts, insomuch that I could not lye in the chamber alone; I made what use I could of opportunities to desire comfort from such godly Christians as I could meet withal to counsel me in the ways of God, and I laboured to hearken to them, but found my heart very dull and heavy for a time, untill about three years since, I began to find comfort from some Sermons that I heard, and books that I read, and some thoughts that the Lord settled upon my heart by his spirit, hoping that there was mercy for me. And I did believe that I had all the prayers of all the Saints in the world put up to the Throne of grace for me, and that my Saviour had satisfied for my sins, and through him God was reconciled to me; and in particular I found comfort from these and some other promises, John 16. 35. *Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me, shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst.* Verse 37. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*, John 14. 1. *Let not your hearts be troubled ye believe in God, believe also in me*, Jerem. 31. 33. *But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the house of* Israel; *After those days saith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their Hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* And I do find in my heart a testimony of my believing, & that I do love God, wrought in me by his blessed Spirit, by these particulars.

1. I love God, not through slavish fear, but for his name and glory, so that I can leave all for him, and nothing is so dear and precious unto me, as the love of God; and nothing so great a joy to me, as that Christ who dyed for me, hath not left me.

2. I find such comfort from the Lord, that he by his

his Spirit revives my drooping heart, and fills my empty Soul, and when my poor spirit is even fainting away, I find comfort from his glorious power and presence. 3. When I cannot come to Ordinances it is a grief to me, and when I am in duty it is a grief to me that I am so dull and find no more inlargement; yet my affections are groaning after the Lord Jesus Christ in Duties, and I have a great longing to receive more of Christ. And I find more comfort when my heart is inlarged in duty, than in any other thing in the World, and I know that all my comfort is from Jesus Christ. 4. What I desire to injoy, I seek to injoy it in God through peace of conscience, that it may be to the comfort of my faith, for God is pure, and it is a great grief to me that I can serve my God no better. 5. I do not fear death, for my faith is so setled in God, that I long to be with my Saviour, when he shall be pleased to call me to him; Christ hath dyed for me, to take away the fear of the second death. *A. O.*

XXIX. *Experiences of* M. W.

I Have from my child-hood desired to serve the Lord, and to make his Commandments my rule to walk by; and I thought once that I could have said with the young man in the Gospel, *All these have I kept from my youth.* But it pleased the Lord to visit me with a grievous sickness, even unto death; and then my heart told me that I was a great sinner, and my conscience accused me, that I had loved the world more than I had loved Jesus Christ. Then I was afflicted in my spirit with fear, because I could not believe that Jesus Christ had dyed for me. I besought the Lord by earnest prayer, that he would be pleased to spare me, for I found my self to be very unfit for death. I made Promises to the Lord, that if he did please to spare

me, I would lead a new life, and did resolve to walk more close to my God. The Lord was pleased, in mercy, to hear my Prayer, and grant this request, and spare me a while longer to serve him in the land of the living.

But notwithstanding my promises, and the great deliverance the Lord had wrought for me in keeping me back from Hell, and the Grave, I had soon forgotten all. I began to love the world again, and lived as vainly as before. But the Lord smote my conscience, and sorely troubled my spirit for this backsliding, putting me in mind of the promises I had made to him in my sickness. With great bitterness of heart and grief of Soul, I mourned for my failings, and did again resolve, for the time to come to keep more close to God, and set a watch over my heart. But the more I looked into my heart, the more vile I saw my self to be, and was greatly troubled that I had so often played the hypocrite with my God. I again besought the Lord by prayer, that he would be pleased, for Jesus Christ his sake to forgive all my sins, and backslidings, which I then was grieved for, with loathing, more than ever before.

My conscience was so wounded, and my Soul cast down in so great a conflict, that my spirits were almost dryed up, and my heart began to grow weary and faint with crying and groaning after my Saviour. Yet the Lord was pleased to humble me still more and more, and to try me further, as gold is tryed in the fire. And my afflictions were doubled upon me by Satans malice, who tempted me with evil thoughts, which was grievous to my Soul. When I had prayed (with a troubled spirit as well as I could) the Devil put thoughts into my mind, quite contrary to the frame of a praying spirit. When I had read the word of God;

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he tempted me with doubts and questions, touching some things therein, whether it was truth or not. And Satan followed his temptations so close upon me, that as soon as the Lord had inabled me to repulse one temptation, the Devil assaulted me with another, so that I had scarce time to fetch my breath, one temptation followed so close upon another.

Being troubled much in my spirit in this condition, I was tempted to discontent, that the Lord had not taken away these Temptations from me, and in anger fell into some great passions, even near unto desperation. And I was sorely busseted by the Devil, in this my lowest extremity, who assaulted me with fresh temptations of blasphemous thoughts touching God, so that when in the bitterness of my Soul I was seeking after Jesus Christ, and had named God, he would put into my mind the objects of the brute Creatures, and even whilst I was pouring out my Soul to the Creator, and was pleading a promise, he brought a curse to my thoughts. Thus was I repulsed in all duties by Satans terrifying my Soul to perswade me; that it was in vain for me to seek for Salvation, because I had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost (which God by his word hath declared shall never be forgiven neither in this World, nor in the World to come) because I was discontented that the Lord after all my addresses to him had not delivered me from all my troubles. But the Lord gave me strength to resist Satan, and say in the bitterness of my Soul to my God, far be it from me O Lord, to be offended with thee. And the Lord wrought this resolution in my Soul, that I did protest before the Lord, that although I should see nothing but Hell before me, yet I would trust in him, and stay my self upon my God, until he

me, I would lead a new life, and did resolve to walk more close to my God. The Lord was pleased, in mercy, to hear my Prayer, and grant this request, and spare me a while longer to serve him in the land of the living.

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he pleased to send me deliverance. I made my case known to a dear friend, who gave me some comfort; he told me, that the sin against the Holy Ghost, was to sin wilfully, by perpetual despite against God: I found a clear testimony in my conscience, that I was so far from despiting the Spirit of grace, that I had not sinned willingly against God, for I found it to be an affliction to me to be tempted with evil thoughts touching the Lord, tho' I consented not to them; and I found my Soul grieved that I could not be freed from them. And then with abundance of tears, by often prayers and supplications to the Throne of Grace, I poured forth my sinful Soul at the foot-stool of Gods mercy, exalting free grace, and pleading the unspeakable riches of the mercies of God, that would appear in the conversion of such a sinner as I had been. Methoughts it seemed to exalt Gods mercy, and to be one of the greatest manifestations of free grace in the world, to be to the great glory of the Lord, and unspeakable comfort of my poor Soul, if he would be pleased to bring me to himself.

Now when, by the Divine power of God, my heart was thus resolved to trust in him and to wait upon him, then the Lord was pleased to shew me to my comfort, the example of Jesus Christ, who had no sin in himself, yet he was tempted of the Devil. And likewise of *Paul*, how Satan sent sent a *messenger to buffet him*, who then prayed unto God, and the Lord said, *my grace is sufficient for thee*, my power is made known in thy weakness. Then I began to be comforted and to think if Christ himself was tempted, if the children of God who had been eminent examples, had lain under temptations, and the Lord according to his promises had strengthned and delivered them, there

there was hope for me. And the Lord wrought faith in my heart to believe, that he would ſtrengthen me, and keep me that I ſhould not periſh for ever.

And I have ſince found great conſolation in many promiſes, which the Lord hath revealed in his Word, which I have pleaded before him, ſome of which follow. Iſaiah 50. 10. *Who is among you, that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his Servant, that walketh in darkneſs and hath no light, let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay upon his God.* I applyed this promiſe thus, I had walked in darkneſs and ſaw no light, but God had wrought in my heart to fear him, and a willingneſs to obey my Saviour, and a reſolution to truſt in the name of the Lord, therefore I knew it was not in vain to ſtay my ſelf upon my God. And *Matth.* 12. 20. (It is ſaid by Chriſt) *A bruiſed reed ſhall he not break, and ſmoaking flax ſhall he not quench, till he ſend forth judgment unto victory.* The Lord having broken and bruiſed me in the ſenſe of ſin, and drawn forth my heart to rely upon him, I believed that he would in the end give me victory through Chriſt, and Iſa. 40. 29. *He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaſeth ſtrength.* This promiſe I laid hold on, becauſe Chriſt ſaith, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt, Mat.* 11. 28. When I had refreſhed my ſpirit by applying theſe and ſome other Promiſes to my own Soul, by faith in the Lord Jeſus, I found an effect of my faith by that love to God, which by his holy Spirit he had wrought in my Soul, which appeareth by theſe particular Evidences.

1. I am grieved that I have been ſo unbelieving towards God, and ſo impatient in my afflictions. 2. I am troubled to think that whilſt I live here

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in this mortal flesh, I cannot be quite *freed* from sin, but must live to offend so good a God, who hath wrought so great a deliverance for me. 3. I bless the Lord, I can (through Divine goodness from the testimony of the blessed Spirit) say with comfort the Lord is my God, whereby I can cry, *Abba Father.* 4. I can I hope willingly deny my self in all things, and should the Lord call me to it take up the Cross of my Saviour Jesus to follow him, and bless God in all dispensations whatsoever. 5. I find a total desire, and willingness in my heart to surrender my self to be led by Gods blessed Spirit, in all holiness and piety, with perseverance, that I may live all my days to the glory of my God. 6. My affections are more firmly and really knit to God than to any thing, so that I can part with any thing for God; and I value my interest in God above all things, and I find more joy in him than in all things. 7. I am not now afraid to dye, should God call me, that I may go to be with my Saviour for ever. 8. I desire to be in love and charity with all men, but in an especial manner I do love the godly, because in appearance they are the children of God, and I desire to feed upon Christ by faith in his Ordinances. *M.W.*

XXX. *Experiences of* H. C.

AT the beginning of the Civil Wars, I as well as others was much frighted; and when it was said that such a day the City should be destroyed, I was amazed; I had been a hearer a great while of very eminent Ministers in the City of *London*, yet profited very little by what I heard. For if they preached the mercies of God, I feared they did not belong to me, because I could not find those qualifications in me which I thought I ought to have, if I expected to receive mercy. I could rejoyce in hearing of the promises, but could not

not lay hold on them as belonging to me; but ſtill I went to hear though with much trouble of mind. That day wherein it was ſaid, the City ſhould be deſtroyed, I began to call my ſelf to account, what would become of my Soul, if it ſhould be ſo: I was almoſt amazed, but did much deſire of God that he would give me faith, and with the Publican *I* ſaid, *Lord I believe, help my unbelief*; I then reſolved with my ſelf, well, I will caſt my Soul into the arms of God, *If I periſh, I periſh.* And through belief in him, I was quieted in my ſpirit at that time: But my ſenſe of peace was ſoon vailed. And I was afterward ſore afflicted with the ſight of my ſin, and was fully perſwaded that I was an Hypocrite, and that all that I did was but for fear of Hell, then durſt I not be any where alone, for fear of the ſight of the Devil, and if I had been at prayer by my ſelf, I durſt not open my eyes.

Thus was I perplexed with fear and perſwaded my ſelf I ſhould periſh; my condition was very bitter to me, and I did much labour for a reſting place for my Soul. And being one day at a Funeral, the Miniſter that preached the Sermon, ſhewed the ſufficiency of God, and the inſufficiency of man, and that all good came from God. He ſaid, that it was as poſſible for that dead man to put life into himſelf, as for any man to gain the leaſt drop of grace of himſelf, *for Faith is the gift of God.* Then I began to conſider with my ſelf, and to take notice of the promiſes of God; and I would write them to keep them about me: I then being a Hearer at St. *M.* the Miniſter was much upon the affairs of the times, and I was much troubled about what I heard, for I found not my Soul ſatisfied with that matter. When I came home, I found that my Soul was not able to live with that food;

food: and it pleased the Lord to direct me to hear Mr. *Sympson* at *All-hollows Thames Street* and he was setting forth the free grace of God to poor sinners.

And then I began to reason with my self, that surely in putting all mercy from me, I did dishonour God, for he inviteth all to believe his promises. And I read that he saith, *As I live I desire not the death of a sinner.* And Christ saith, *he came to save sinners*, and that *the whole need not a Physitian, but those that are sick:* And God hath promised, *not to break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoaking flax; and Christ dyed for the ungodly, and God is no respecter of persons.* And Christ promiseth, *That whosoever comes unto him, he will in no wise cast off.* When I had considered these and other promises; And that place where it is said, *that without Faith it is impossible to please God*, then I was earnest with God, that he would give me faith and sincerity of *Heart*, And that place did much refresh me, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* Yet again after all this, the sense of mine own unworthiness did much trouble me, and I was greatly grieved that I was so cumbred in the world, and began to doubt, saying, sure I have not chosen the better part.

For sometimes I should rejoyce, and praise God being much satisfied from those places of Scripture, which say; *He hath laid our iniquities on him, and he hath laid help on him that is mighty.* And in another place, *Ye are saved by grace, not of your selves, it is the gift of God:* And, *We have an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the Righteous. And he was made sin for us that knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* And, *behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the World.* But in a short time I should lose all my sense of comfort, and then I had sad thoughts, musing

muſing what God would do with me. In the depth of theſe conflicts, at laſt that place refreſhed me, where God ſaith, *I the Lord change not, therefore ye Sons of* Jacob *are not conſumed.* Though before I was not ſatisfied that my faith was true, but doubted that ſurely I had preſumed upon falſe grounds, and was much perplexed, yet now it pleaſed God in the midſt of my diſtreſs, to bring to my mind theſe words, *The Spirit ſaith come, and the Bride ſaith come, and every one that will come, drink of the water of life freely.* I ſaid, of my ſelf I cannot come: But I prayed, Lord *draw me, and I ſhall run after thee.* And this word was caſt into my Soul by the Lord, *My grace is ſufficient for thee,* only do thou believe. And God hath now wrought faith in me, and by the teſtimony of his Spirit hath ſealed his love in Chriſt to me, working in my heart ſo to love him, that I have caſt my ſelf wholly upon him. *H. C.*

XXXI. *Experiences of* T. R. *Mariner.*

AT the Age of two and twenty being in the *Streights*, I was taken by the mercileſs *Turks*, but the power of the Lord delivered me out of captivity by a miraculous way unexpected; The Lord giving me grace to call on him, gave me a gracious anſwer. That *he would never leave me, nor forſake me.*

In the War with *France*, on the Coaſt of *Guinea* I was taken by a *French* Man of War, and was greatly afflicted, for want of food and raiment, and other hardſhips which they laid on me, to have turned to their Catholick Religion, yet the Lord ſtill promiſed me, that he would give me a deliverance out of their mercileſs hands; who made good his promiſe to me in a ſhort time, bleſſed be his holy name. After this I went a Voyage to *Braſile*, and our Ship being laden, we did intend for *Portugal*,

Portugal, but they detained us a whole year, ſo that our Ship was all eaten with worms, and we were fain to keep pumping for nine months, but the longer the worſe, for in our paſſage homeward we could not tell which death to chuſe, either to ſtarve, or to be drowned, for our Victuals was ſo ſmall, that for one year and more we had no bread in our Ship, but eat the roots of Trees, made into a ſubſtance like Oatmeal, and for Beef, one ounce for a man a day which ſtunk ſo that none could have eat it but men in our caſe; for Drink, we were glad of a pint of water a day during the time of our paſſage, which was ſeventeen weeks; but in this paſſage we ſaw the wonderful works of God, for he ſent us for three weeks in ſeaſonable times, fiſh called Dolphins, ſometimes two or three in a day; And as we grew within three hundred Leagues of the Coaſt of *Portugal*, and our Proviſion near ſpent, only three or four days left, and all our men ſick, and weak, and almoſt ſtarved, it pleaſed God of his great mercy to ſend us a Ship of *Fluſhing*, a Man of War, who proved to us as *Joſeph*, to the children of *Iſrael*, for they brought us Victuals which ſaved our lives, and after they had taken our Ship, they were fain to put on board forty men to keep her from ſinking, for it pleaſed God that the next day after we had a violent Storm, and a great Sea broke upon her, ſo that we thought ſhe would never have recovered her ſelf again, for our goods did ſhut all to one ſide, and ſo ſhe was fain to go untill ſhe came to *Fluſhing*, but we poor creatures were in great peril and danger of our Lives, and yet the Lord comforted me by his Promiſe, That he would bring me to ſhore, and would deliver my life from death, and my eyes from tears; and he hath done graciouſly with me above my deſerts, and inabled

me above my ſtrength, and delivered me a[bove] my hope, therefore will I praiſe him without measure, and magnifie his name without end.

Three years after this being on the Coaſt of *Ireland*, it pleaſed the Lord to raiſe a violent Storm, and in the morning by the dawning of the day, we were ſo near the Shore, that to mans judgment there was nothing but death approaching, for we knew no place of that Land by reaſon of the Fogg, and Rain that we had all the day, and knew not where to go, but as the Lord, who is the Pilot of Pilots did carry us, untill four a clock at Night, which in *December* is dark, and then we came to a great high head-land, and a little without that lay a great ſand, ſo that we could not go any other way but betwixt them; being then paſt all hopes of life, we forced her through the Sea, ſo that it brake over our heads, inſomuch that we could not tell whether we were in the Sea or the Bark, but by our feet and hands, for we could not ſee for the violence of the water, only he that was at the Helm: And yet in the ſpace of a quarter of an hour we were in a ſafe place, newly taken out of the jaws of death. So that I of all men have great cauſe to be always rendring thanks to my God, for his continual and moſt ſweet favours unto me, ſinful, wretched, and empty man, void of all ſpiritual goodneſs.

Furthermore, I being after this in a Ship of 300 Tuns lying on the Coaſt of *Virginia*, wind-bound the ſpace of ſeven weeks, it pleaſed God to viſit our people with the Peſtilential Feaver, and the Callenture, which is a violent Feaver, or Madneſs at firſt, and we had in our Ship two hundred thirty five Souls at that time, and it was the will and pleaſure of God that we had a hundred of them ſick at one time, ſo that we had but few to look

to

me ſick, and were in great want of Proviſions, yet we knew not whether to go; but it pleaſed God to raiſe a great Storm, ſo that a great Sea brake into our main Sail, and we had two foot water between Decks; and our poor ſick people cryed out they were drowned, but within an hour after, by the mercy of God, we had fair weather, and fair wind, and within three or four days God ſet us ſafe on Land, to our great joy and comfort, that before were almoſt paſt hopes, ſo that he cauſed us to ſay with the Prophet *David*, *It was good for me that I was afflicted.* And yet have another choice mercy to make known of what God hath done for me, for he hath now called me out of the world, but not out of the Land of the living; he hath alſo opened my eyes, and made clear my underſtanding with *Mary*, to chuſe the better part; and whatſoever the World, or Satan can caſt upon me, it ſhall all turn to my good; for I *know that my Redeemer liveth*, and him my Soul deſires to bleſs and praiſe, which I truſt I ſhall do till my change cometh, as God ſhall inable me, and the Lord ſtrengthen my faith.

XXXII. *Experiences of* T. G.

IT hath pleaſed the Lord God of his own free mercy and love in Jeſus Chriſt to prevent and keep me ever ſince I was born from many thouſand dangers, and yet I like an unruly Creature, have kicked at his Fatherly protection, and run into many groſs and vile ſins. The firſt groſs one was, many kinds of unlawful gaming, which held me as a bond-ſlave near thirty years, to the great endangering both of my Body and Soul, but yet it pleaſed the Lord to look graciouſly upon me, and to give me afterwards an hatred againſt this vice, and withal, he put into my mind a reſolution, which I confirmed with a vow, as followeth: 'That as

'I

'I loved God and his Word, or my own Soul, I 'would never play at any game for money ſo long 'as I lived. The Lord was pleaſed to accept of my good will, and bleſſed me and mine in my lawfull calling many years, untill at the laſt that old Serpent the Devil, envying my happy proceedings in this Reformation, he drew me into many other ſins, which had almoſt brought me to as bad an end as the firſt. But the Lord out of the loweſt Extremities gives in remedies to his Children, and he gave me an hatred againſt them alſo, and a Reſolution, *Never to commit them any more.*

Yet about two or three years after, that old enemy of mankind, Satan, that roaring Lion ſeeking whom he may devour, came again with turnings to deſtroy me, perſwading me, that to drink with my Neighbours, was acceptable to God (which may be uſed without exceſs) but I gave will the full reins, which brought me back again to my former courſes, withal annexing wrath and anger to my Houſe and Family, perſwading me that I muſt rule in my houſe, which had brought me beſides my ſelf, had not God helped me, who never fails thoſe whom he loves, and that put their truſt in him: For preſently upon this extremity, he ſent this remedy. 1. A ſight of my ſins: 2. A grief and ſorrow for them: 3. A reſolution to leave them: And 4. The Lord carryed me through a way to leave them, which was thus.

I began to call to mind what was the greateſt thing I loved in this World, and in the World to come, beſides thoſe that I named before, which I ſet oppoſite to theſe two monſters: Then I vowed before the Lord, deſiring his aſſiſtance, 'That 'as I loved the Holy Ghoſt the comforter, or ever 'looked to have comfort from the bleſſed commu-'nion of the body and blood of Chriſt Jeſus to

'cleanſe

'cleanſe my ſins, ſo if I did remember or was in 'perfect ſenſe, I would never drink above two rea-'ſonable glaſſes, or cups of Wine, or four cups of 'Beer in any one place, or at any one time, *with-'out any Equivocation*, And that at any time when I 'came into the doors of my houſe, if there were 'any controverſie in my Family, that then I 'would with gentle perſwaſions do my beſt indea-'vour to end it; And this with Gods help I would perform. And I prayed, 'O Lord my God, 'bleſs my hand and my heart to perform thy will, 'that when any temptation to gaming or drunken-'neſs, or luſt ſhall aſſault me, either by thought 'or any other means, that then preſently I may 'fly unto thee in the name of Chriſt Jeſus my Sa-'viour. And I do ſtill fly unto God, confeſſing and ſorrowing for my ſins, deſiring the Lord to help and aſſiſt me to perform and keep all theſe, and in all thing to ſerve God as long as I live. I cannot be ſo humbled for my ſins as I deſire, yet have I had much trouble for ſin, and have ſhed tears many a time, and I have been much troubled that my heart cannot be broken enough; yet I have had many croſſes, but I know it is the hand of God, and I deſire to lye low before him.

When God firſt diſcovered my ſins to me, I was was much terrified. But I have found much comfort in that glorious promiſe, which God made when *Adam* had ſinned, that *The ſeed of the Woman ſhould break the Serpents head*, *Gen.* 3. And alſo that ſweet Promiſe declared by the Lord Jeſus, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt*, *Matth.* 11. 28. And *Peter* declareth ſaying, *Repent and be converted, that your ſins may be blotted out, when the times of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord.* I have pleaded theſe and ſeveral other promiſes with God, and

have

have by faith truſted in God, *who bids us caſt our care on him, and he will care for us*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. And I do believe in God, and caſt my ſelf upon him, knowing all the Promiſes to be yea, and Amen in Chriſt. And I have theſe effects of Gods gracious ſpirit, working Regeneration in my Soul. 1. In that the Lord (bleſſed be his holy name) hath ſo ſetled my heart on himſelf, that I could leave friends, relations, and all things for God. 2. I find in my heart a real affection and love ſtrongly carryed out to all the children of God, and I love to do good to the people of God. 3. I take much delight to hear the word of God preached, and to partake of duties with the people of God & to have communion with God in private duties. 4. I am troubled when my heart is cold in duty, but much comforted, when my heart is inlarged towards God. 5. I believe that God will ſave me through Chriſt for ever. *T. G.*

XXXIII. *Experiences of* M. H.

IN my youthful age it pleaſed God to give me an heart to take delight to hear the Word preached at many places, but eſpecially at St. *Antholins* at the morning Lectures, and this I did often for ſome time, untill Satan ſtirred up many Inſtruments to call me Puritan with many other reproachful tearms, that made me aſhamed to go in publick; but like *Nicodemus* by ſtealth, as it were, in the dark: But it pleaſed the Lord to convince me of Satans wiles, that he was a deceiver from the firſt, and that in hearing the word Preached, thoſe that would be Souldiers in Chriſts School, muſt not be daunted for every fowl; and 'If I did look for Salva-'tion by Jeſus Chriſt, I muſt manfully fight under 'the Banner of Chriſt, and hold out to the 'end, if I would be ſaved. From the conſideration hereof, God was pleaſed to put courage into my

my heart, to hold on in the ways of God, and in profeſſing the Goſpel, which I did, though with abundance of weakneſs and difficulties; and thus I did continually go on though darkly, until it p'eaſed God to break forth in his moſt glorious *light*; for by ſpecial providence I was brought to ſee an utter ruine to my Soul without a Chriſt; and tho' I had heard much of Chriſt by the outward ear, yet had I no experimental knowledge of him, till the word of Chriſt ſhewed me, that my condition was ſuch as *Paul* ſpeaks of to the *Epheſians*, that *I was dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and except I was quickned by the Spirit, and by Faith did bath my Soul in the blood of Chriſt, I was an undone creature, notwithſtanding all my long hearing the word preached.*

Having then weighed many circumſtances, and had conference with many of the people of God, both Preachers and others, I was very much ſtrengthened in faith, and had an aſſurance of the love of God in Chriſt Jeſus, whereby I did find much comfort to my Soul; and ſince hearing ſome able Miniſters of the Goſpel hold forth moſt precious truths, I found much comfort: And more particularly Mr. *Bridges* of *Yarmouth*, opening that comfortable Scripture, Pſal. 41. 11. *Why art thou caſt down O my Soul, why art thou diſquieted within me? truſt in God, &c.* His Doctrine was, 'That a 'godly man had no juſt cauſe to be diſcouraged, 'whatſoever his condition was; either the ſence 'of ſin, or the temptations of Satan, or trouble, or 'afflictions; that a man had cauſe to be humbled for 'the leaſt ſin, but not to be diſcouraged at the 'greateſt, from truſting in God, but to rely upon 'the *Lord by Faith in Chriſt*, whatſoever his diſin'couragements were; which hath ſince cauſed me to walk in a thankful poſture towards God for his unſpeakable

unſpeakable mercy; and *It is my great grief, that I can be no more thankful, ſeeing I have received ſo much mercy from God, whom I do daily offend*; which hath made me with *Paul* to cry out, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death!* But that the next words produce comfort, *bleſſed be God through Jeſus Chriſt.*

Yet after this, it pleaſed God, to ſuffer me to fall into a ſinful condition, by being too confident in my own ſtrength, which fall coſt me abundance of tears, ſighs and ſobbings of heart, even as *David* ſaid, *to the breaking and drying of my bones*: It made me walk ſadly for many months together, & even to deſpair of any help. And ſeeing I had brought ſo much diſhonour to God, and ſcandal to the Goſpel, and reproach to the Profeſſors thereof, this did much preſs my ſoul; 'Conſidering what a Profeſſor, 'I was before, in ſtanding for the glory of God, and 'oppoſing all gainſayers, and for me to fall; Oh! 'this did make ſuch gaſhes in my ſoul, that the 'conſideration thereof, cauſed me to walk ſadly, and 'ſorrowfully, and with ſo much ſhame that I could 'not indure to go in the ſtreets, *But that urgent 'neceſſity forc'd me to go out for comfort.*

Then it pleaſed God by ſpecial providence to caſt me under *Dr. Homes* his Miniſtry, and he treated on that ſubject concerning backſliding, out of *Jer.* 14 *v.* 7. *O Lord, though our iniquities teſtify againſt us, yet do thou it for thy name ſake, for our backſlidings are many, &c.* which Sermon was by the working of the Spirit of God effectual unto me, for I was almoſt under deſpair before, but the Lord was pleaſed to give me much comfort from this Doctrine That Saints may be guilty of many backſlidings 'yet they ſhould not deſpair, for that was a grea-'ter ſin. The Doctor made this Uſe, That if 'Saints might break their peace, wicked and unre-

'generate men might break their necks. A second 'use was, that a Saint should beware of backsliding, 'and make all speed to go to Jesus Christ for more 'strength to keep and uphold him for the future 'This did give me some comfort, and caused me to set upon the work of seeking to Jesus Christ more earnestly, because Christ told *Paul*, that *his grace was sufficient for him*; I had rested in that little *mustard-seed-faith* I had before, but now it did begin to spring and blossom, to the praise and glory of Jesus Christ, that he should as it were snatch me as a Brand out of those burnings of Hell, and establish my poor soul by his free grace, to see all my iniquities laid to the charge of Christ, as *Isa.53. v.5. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.* Which Scripture being opened by a worthy member of that Church Mr. F. it did much strengthen my Faith in the Application, when I came to consider, First, That 'it was iniquity that the Lord Jehovah laid on 'Christ. Secondly, That it was my iniquity 'that was thus laid on him. Thirdly, that it was 'the Lord himself that did lay it on him. And 'Fourthly, That the Lord had done it already, it 'was not now to do. All these points did much 'comfort me, seeing they were back'd by Scripture, and such a caution given by the Apostle *Paul*, *Heb.3. 12.* saying, *Take heed lest there be found in you an evil heart of unbelief, &c.* Which is a great sin and plague to any poor Soul, this wrought much with me but then applying several other Scriptures, to the everlasting praise of Jehovah, and to Jesus Christ my Saviour, this scripture was produced in *Psal. 68.16.* compared with the Apostles words, speaking of Christ, *Thou hast ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, even rebellious*

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ones; that the Lord God may dwell amongst them. And that of *Ezek.* 16. 7, 8, 9, 10. A precious Scripture for troubled souls, to be meditated on for comfort: 'That a man being in his filth and guilt, and all over 'with blood, nay, when no eye would pity him, that 'then was a time of love to his soul; Oh! mercy and free grace indeed! Then again, considering *The new Covenant, to open blind eyes, and to bring prisoners out of prison, to the glorious light and liberty of the sons of God, and his proclamation,* Isa. 55. *Ho every one that thirsteth come: and in that of* Joh. 6. v 37. *him that cometh to Christ, he hath promised in no wise to cast out. Though thy sins be as Crimson and Scarlet,* yea, of such a deep dye as that with *Paul, I* may say, *to be chief of sinners,* yet it pleased God to give me in refreshment from he same Scripture.

About two years since, Providence cast my Lot at *Westminster,* where I heard Mr. *W.* and having observed many honest people, at hearing of the Word, I then sought to the Lord by earnest prayer, so to direct me by his blessed Spirit, that my only aims might be for his glory, the good of others, and with comfort to my own soul: It pleased the Lord to direct my heart (notwithstanding all opposition of Satan, and the persuasion of some others) to resolve and to break through all opposition and difficulties and to joyn in the worship of the Lord God of our Fathers, and to walk in his ways, according to the strictest rule of the Gospel of Jesus Christ held forth in his Word. *M. H.*

XXXIV. *EXPERIENCES of* L. P.

ABout twenty years since I being then with Child, was much troubled at some thoughts, which God put into my mind, touching my conversation; which lay so fore and heavy upon me, that could not tell what to do; Because I saw, though endeavoured as much as I could, to do my duty to

my God. yet I was not able to live as I ſhould; and then I began to know what the worm of conſcience meant, I feeling what until then I was ignorant of: and the blackneſs of my ſpirit was ſuch, with the burden of my troubled and afflicted ſoul, that I could not at that time take comfort in any thing, and had I not been with child, & affected with natural inclination to the Babe in my womb, I had been in danger (had not God prevented me) to have deſtroyed my ſelf, for I had ſome temptations that way; but my God ſtrengthened me: yet before I was brought to bed, I found peace and comfort, and through grace had ſuch ſettlement in my ſpirit, that I could with joy night and day call upon my God believingly: but before I attained to this, I had many ſore conflicts, until after ſome conſiderations that the Lord had put into my mind; as firſt, touching the child that I went with. becauſe God hath ſaid, *The juſt and innocent ſlay thou not*; and then conſidering the innocency of the child, it became a means to ſtay my hand from laying violence upon my ſelf.

Yet for a time I was much troubled in ſpirit, til God gave me peace from theſe, and other Scripture promiſes, where the Lord ſaith, *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, & thou ſhalt glorify me*, Pſal. 50. 15. *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the Law, but under grace* Rom. 6. 14. Now the teſtimonies of my converſion, and true believing, in which I hope I have a ſeal of my Intereſt in the Lord Ieſus are theſe: 1. My love to God, which is real, ſincere, and hearty, deſiring him above any thing elſe whatſoever. 2. My relying upon Jeſus Chriſt, having nothing of my own to reſt upon, I fly to him, and reſt on him for all, as my alone Saviour and Redeemer. 3. I delight to read the holy Word of God, and to hear

hear, or otherwise to partake thereof, in which I find much comfort. 4. The comfort which I find by inlargement of my soul, when God comes in under the means in dutys, and the loathnesse I have to be deprived of the Ordinances. 5. The Peace I find with my God in my soul, which is sweet, though not without much heavinesse of spirit for my failings, I do not live without waines and changes in my Spiritual life, and faith towards the Lord, for sometimes I trust God with all, and at other times I meet with some doubtings, yet blessed be God I find them more and more, asswaged, and my communion with Christ every day more sweet and full. 6. I doubt not but the Lord Jesus Christ my Redeemer will so support me, through his Grace, that what ever my condition hath been, or shall be here, I shall not fail of salvation through Christ in heaven for ever. L. P.

XXXV. *Experiences of* E. P.

I Have been troubled at the thoughts of my corruptions, and wretched condition. I have formerly had some doubtings touchings the Scriptures, whether they were truth or not, but have been since troubled, that I made those foolish doubtings to question Gods word, and was so wounded in my Conscience for my sin therein, that I feared I should be damned for it. because I thought it was a sin that God would not pardon. I had also strange thoughts about the sinful wayes of ungodly people, and considering how loosely people live, I and temptations to perswade me, that surely there was some easier way to Heaven then the Scriptures had laid down, or then I had learnt. But for these evil thoughts of mine, I have been so afflicted in my spirit that I thought I was a damned wretch. I have been tempted by these blasphemous thoughts against the Lord, which have so afflicted me; that somtimes I feared the Devil would fetch me away, and carry me

to Hell; and I have thought sometimes, that surely God could not in justice pardon such sinnes as I have committed. I have also been tempted to make away my self, but the Lord God put me in mind to consider, that it would not give me ease or comfort, but be the way to enter into endless miseries.

And thus I lay afflicted with a most sad & trouble some spirit for about a year, yet (though with little hope from my present sence) I had desires that God would save me, and some groanings I had after him. And in his time which is best, I began to find inlargement of heart from God, and a great longing for Christ, which encreased through the working of his glorious power, so that (me thought) I could have been content to have gone through all the miseries in the World to have enjoyed him. And in my sleep I dreamed that I saw my Saviour lying in a Grave, and after again, I saw him risen from death; when I awaked, and had some thoughts about my dream, I found comfort in my soul, and begun more sweetly to hope, that Christ Jesus dyed for my sins, and is risen again for my justification: but the Devil who goes about like a roaring Lyon did still tempt me, so that I was again ready to despair for my former evil thoughts, and I was afraid that Satan would have me; and I doubted that God had no part in me, which caused me to weep much, and I was exceedingly troubled, and sometimes thought, that verily I heard the Devil coming in a Whirlwind for me, and so terrified was my conscience that from the thoughts of the wrath which I feared, I could have wished my self a Beast, a Dog, or any thing, because their misery would have an end.

But after many comfortable discourses with friends, and reading some godly books that came to my hands, the Lord God in time delivered me from

from theſe temptations, and hath ſince comforted me with theſe Promiſes, to the great joy of my heart, though ſome times I have not been without ſome doubtings. The Lord hath ſaid, *Be content with ſuch things as ye have, for he hath ſaid, I will never leave thee nor forſake thee, ſo that I may boldly ſay, the Lord is my helper*, Heb. 13.5,6. The Lord ſaith, *ſin ſhall not have dominion over you*, Rom. 6. 14. This hath often given me much comfort, and kept up my ſoul when I have been ready to deſpair: And Chriſt ſaith, *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth*, John 14. 16,17.

And I have this teſtimony of my intereſt in Chriſt, by faith wrought by his bleſſed Spirit in me. 1 I ſee ſuch a frailty in my fleſh, that except the Lord ſend his holy Spirit to inable me, I cannot do any thing of my duty to God of my ſelf; it is the Spirit of the Lord, and not any thing in me, that is the foundation of my comfort. 2. I have had many times (if my heart deceive me not) clear teſtimonies and evidences that I love God more than any thing elſe, and deſire him above all. 3. I deſire much to hear the Word, and am troubled that ſometimes it doth not ſo pierce into my heart, as I deſire. 4. I have ſometimes ſuch ſweet comforts and enlargements in my ſoul, that I find much peace with God thereby, which I prize above all things in the world. 5. I deſire to ſerve the Lord in all things and am troubled when any thing obſtructs thoſe deſires. 6. I hope for ſalvation and true bleſſedneſs from Jeſus Chriſt my Redeemer, and from him alone.
F. P.

XXXVI. *Experiences of* D. C.

I Have had great Conflicts of Soul for my ſins, and againſt ſin, and have ſhed many tears by night and by day; I have been much troubled at the conſideration of ſuch things, as have been at any time a clog to hinder me from enioying ſpiritual Communion with God, which I have deſired. It is the greateſt grief I have ever had, that I have offended ſo good a God; and indeed my ſins have been a very great trouble to me, and eſpecially, in that God hath given me a meaſure of knowledge, and I have not walked up to it, to live according to the light I have received. But I have found comfort in God's Promiſes: Chriſt ſaith, *All that the Father giveth me ſhall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wiſe caſt out*, John chap. 6. verſe 37. *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, ſaith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye ſhall be my Sons and Daughters, ſaith the Lord Almighty.* The Lord will receive us if we repent and believe; and Chriſt calls, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt*, Matth. 11. 28. And as a teſtimony of my Regeneration, I have theſe Experiences, whereby to give account of the hope that is in me. 1. That all my deſires are chiefly to ſeek God in Chriſt. 2. I find much comfort in duties, to joyn in Ordinances, and to partake of the things of God. 3. I find my heart really at peace with all the World. 4. I believe that the Lord God is at peace with me, and will ſave me for ever through Jeſus Chriſt. *D. C.*

XXXVII.

Experiences of Mris. Katherine Clark.

'HAving met with the Experiences of this Religious and worthy Gentlewoman in the 'account of her Life, publiſhed by her pious Huſband Mr. *Samual Clark*, formerly Miniſter of 'St. *Bennet Fink London*, which were found written in her own hand after her death; and they 'being ſo very pertinent to the others aforementioned, I thought it might be very uſeful to inſert them, without any alteration, in her own 'words.

When I was but young, my Father being at Prayer in his Family, I many times found ſuch ſweetneſs, and was ſo affected therewith, that I could not but wiſh that my heart might be oftner in ſuch a frame, but Childhood, and the Vanities thereof ſoon cooled theſe heavenly ſparks; but my Father (who was a Miniſter) cauſed me to write Sermons, and to repeat the ſame: As alſo to learn Mr. *Perkins* Catechiſm, which I oft repeated to my ſelf when I was alone; and therein I eſpecially took notice of thoſe places wherein he had ſet down the ſigns and marks of a ſtrong and weak Faith, being convinced in my Conſcience that without Faith I could not be ſaved; and that every Faith would not ſerve turn to bring me to Heaven. Hereupon I fell to examination of my ſelf, and though I could not find the marks of a ſtrong, yet through God's Mercy, I found the marks of a true, tho' but weak Faith, which was ſome comfort and ſupport to me. And that God which began this good work in me, was pleaſed to quicken and ſtir me up to a diligent uſe of ſuch means, as himſelf had ordained and appointed for the encreaſe thereof, as hearing the Word, Preaching, private Duties, &c.

But when I was about ſeventeen years old, my Parents ſent me to wait upon a young Gentlewo-

man in *Northamptonshire*, the only Daughter of Sir *W. W.* At which time being sent so far from my near and dear Relations, and meeting with some other discouragements in the Family, thro' want of the Means of Grace, which I formerly enjoyed, I grew very melancholy. I began also to have great workings of Conscience in me, and Satan, the deadly Enemy to the health and welfare of our Souls, who, *like a roaring Lion, walks about continually seeking whom he may devour*, took this advantage, thro' my ignorance *of his Devices*, to raise up fears, doubts, and terrours of Conscience in me, by reason of my manifold sins, and for walking so unworthy of God's Mercies whilst I did enjoy them, and for being so unfruitful under the Means of Grace, and so unable to obey God, and keep his Commandments. And by reason hereof, I had no peace nor rest to my Soul night nor day, but was perswaded that all the threatnings contained in the Book of God, against wicked and ungodly men, did belong to me, and were my portion, as being one of them against whom they were denounced. Insomuch as when I took up the Bible to read therein, it was accompanied with much fear and trembling; yet being convinced that it was my duty frequently to read God's Word, I durst not omit or neglect it. Thus I continued a great while, bearing the burden of grievous Temptations, and inward afflictions of Conscience; yet durst I not open the wound, nor reveal my condition to any, as thinking and judging my case to be like no bodies else. But God, who is rich in mercy, and Jesus Christ, who bought his people at so dear a rate, would not suffer any of his to be lost, and therefore he was graciously pleased to preserve, strengthen and uphold me by his own power, from sinking into Hell through despair, and from running out of my Wits. Thus by reason

reason of my continual grief, and anguish of heart night and day, I was so weakened and changed within the compass of six months, that when I came home my dear Parents scarce knew me.

'For some years after her return, she, for the 'most part, continued in her Fathers Family, 'where by a diligent and conscientious use of the 'the Means, both publick and private, she did thrive 'and grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our 'Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as she increased in 'days and years; Till she was married to Mr. *Samuel Clark*, to whom in all capacities she was an 'excellent Wife; After her death in a little Book 'in her Cabinet, she gave the former account of 'her Conversion to God, and added many more of 'her Experiences to this effect.

I here set down Gods gracious dealings with me, not for my own praise, but for the Glory of God, and to stir up my heart unto true thankfulness for such unvaluable mercies. And I have had many experiences of Gods gracious dealings with me at several times under afflictions. 1. When Personal afflictions have lain upon me in respect of bodily sickness, or Spiritual Distempers. 2. In family afflictions when God hath taken away my children. 3. When I have been under fears that God would take away my dear husband, by some dangerous sickness which he lay under. 4. When I have been under great fears, in the time of our Civil Wars. 5. When I have been under Spiritual Desertion, by Gods hiding his face and favour from me; or by reason of weakness, and wants in grace: Or by reason of strong and prevaling corruptions, or by reason of Satans temptations: In all these Cases I have experienced Gods gracious Dispensations toward me; of which I shall set down a few.

It pleased God for many years to keep me for the most

moſt part in a ſad and deſolate Eſtate and condition not clearly evidencing the certain aſſurance of his love to my ſoul: So that many times I queſtioned whether I was a Child of God or no; whether I had part in Jeſus Chriſt or no: whether I ſhould ever attain to life and ſalvation or no: and this made me walk with a drooping and diſconſolate Spirit, ſo that I could have no ſure comfort in any thing: *But tho' heavineſs endured for a night, yet joy came in the morning*, when the Lord cauſed the light of his countenance to ſhine upon me which was better than life.

It pleaſed God upon the death of my youngeſt Child, that it lay very heavy upon my Spirit, in ſo much that I was brought oft upon my knees to beg ſupport from God, and to crave his grace and aſſiſtance, that I might not break out, to ſpeak or act any thing, whereby Gods name might be diſhonoured, or the Goſpel diſcredited: And that he would be pleaſed to make up this outward loſs, with ſome more durable and Spiritual good; and the Lord was pleaſed to return a gracious and ſpeedy anſwer to theſe my requeſts; for though I lay long under the burden of that loſs, yet the Lord in his due time did ſweetly manifeſt his ſpecial love to my ſoul, aſſuring me that he was my gracious and reconciled Father in Chriſt; whereby my love to him was much increaſed, and even inflamed; ſo that by his grace, it wrought in me more diligence and carefulneſs, to maintain and preſerve theſe Evidences of his love, and to yield a lively ſubmiſſion unto his will, as well in ſuffering as in doing: As alſo by avoiding whatſoever might provoke him, to withdraw the evidences of his love from me, without the ſenſe whereof I could take little or no comfort in any thing.

And furthermore I bleſs God for it, and ſpeak it to the praiſe and glory of his rich and free grace,

my

my prayers and earneſt deſires have been anſwered, by God's giving me comfortable aſſurance, both from the teſtimony of his holy Word, and the witneſs of his bleſſed Spirit, of my eternal and everlaſting Salvation in and by Jeſus Chriſt. Yet have I not been without fears and doubtings many times, through want of looking over my Evidences, or by neglecting to keep a narrow watch over my heart; or from ſome weakneſs of my Faith, and all through my own default and negligence; the Lord pardon it, and make me more circumſpect for the time to come.

By all theſe I have gained this Experience; 1. That God is true and faithful in making good all his promiſes ſeaſonably unto us: As that, *All things ſhall work together for our good*; and that God *will never leave us nor forſake us*, &c. 2. That it is not in vain to wait upon God, and to ſeek unto him in our ſtraits, who is more ready to hear than we are to ask. 3. That I deſire to ſee, yea the Lord hath ſhewed me, the vanity and uncertainty of the moſt ſatisfying comforts that this World can afford, and what an emptineſs there is in them, that ſo I may, (and I deſire ſo to do) keep weaned affections toward them, and to ſit looſe from them, that I may be ready to part with them, when God calls them from me, or me from them.

Again in regard of bodily weekneſs and ſickneſs, my Experiences have been theſe; 1. That as a broken ſhoulder can bear no burden; ſo the leaſt diſtemper, when the heart is not in a holy frame and temper, is a burden inſupportable. If God hides his face from us, and withdraws the evidences of his love, and denies to aſſiſt us by his ſtrength, we can neither do, nor ſuffer any thing. And on the contrary, I found by experience, that I could with much chearfulneſs, holy ſubmiſſion, and willingneſs,

willingneſs, bear great diſtempers, when I enjoyed the favour of God in them: So that then I could readily ſay, *Good is the Word of the Lord, as well as his Word.* And, *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him,* Micah 7. 9. And *Job* 13. 15. *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him.* 2. I found by experience alſo, that by my pains and ſickneſs, I was the better able to ſympathize with, and to pity and pray for others in the like caſe. 3. Hereby I learn'd the more to prize health, and that upon ſeveral accounts, namely, becauſe in health we have liberty and opportunity to enjoy the Publick Ordinances with others of God's People, whereby the Graces of true Chriſtians are quickened, ſtrengthened and increaſed in us, which otherwiſe, by reaſon of our corrupt Natures, are apt to grow cold and languiſh, as will our bodies if they want food. Again, becauſe in health we enjoy the benefit and the comfort of ſweet and quiet ſleep, which much refreſhes and cheers, and which commonly we want in ſickneſs. Laſtly, Becauſe in health, we find ſweet, ſatisfying comfort in the uſe of God's good Creatures; whereas in ſickneſs, the daintieſt food is loathſom, and troubleſom. The conſideration of theſe things made me the more to prize health; to be very thankful for it, and the more careful to imploy and improve health and ſtrength to God's glory, and the furtherance of my own Salvation.

In regard of publick dangers, I have had a great deal of experience of God's goodneſs toward me and mine ſeveral times. For when in the beginning of the Civil Wars and Diſtractions 1642. I was ſometimes overwhelmed with weak and diſtruſtful fears, occaſioned by my not acting faith upon the Promiſes, and not remembring my former Experiences, nor conſidering God's love, power and

fidelity

fidelity to his Children, in performing his ſo many gracious promiſes, made unto them in all eſtates and conditions, and to me among the reſt: Hereupon I reſolved by God's grace and aſſiſtance, not to give way to this diſtruſt and diffidence, praying God to aſſiſt me therein, and found more courage than formerly, ſo far as I knew my own heart; though truly the heart is very deceitful, as I have found by ſad experience; the Lord teach me and inable me to rely upon him with more courage and conſtancy, and more to live by Faith upon his promiſes than formerly I have done. Indeed I have been apt to fall into new fears upon approaching dangers; yet upon ſucceſſes and glorious deliverances, I have oft reſolved, never to diſtruſt God again, and yet my naughty heart hath deceived me, and made me ready to faint; but this I found by experience, to the praiſe of my God's Free Grace, that as troubles have abounded, my conſolations have abounded much more. For God brought ſeaſonably into my mind many precious promiſes, which were as ſo many ſweet Cordials, which much ſupported and comforted my heart, and upheld my ſpirit, when new ſtorms have ariſen, and unexpected deliverances have followed. And I have, [illegible] reſolve, by God's Grace, not to diſtruſt him [illegible] Yea, though more and greater dangers ſhall [illegible] yet I will truſt in him, and ſtay my ſelf upon him. *Though*, as *Job* ſaid, *he ſhould ſlay me.* The good Lord eſtabliſh my heart in this good and holy reſolution, who is *able to keep us to the end*, and hath promiſed that he will *preſerve us by his power, through Faith to the Salvation of our Souls.*

In regard of Satan's Temptations; eſpecially concerning my coming to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, my Experiences have been theſe.

Finding

Finding often that I was very unable to fit and prepare my ſelf for a comfortable approach to that ſacred Ordinance, I uſed to deſire the prayers of the Congregation unto God in my behalf, and uſed the beſt endeavour I could in private, as God enabled me, though I came far ſhort of what was required, and of what I deſired: So that I did truſt and hope, through God's mercy, to find a comfortable day of it, and to have it a ſealing Ordinance to my Soul: But on the contrary, I found much deadneſs, and little ſpiritual taſt, reliſh and comfort in the uſe of it; ſo that my ſpirit was oft much troubled, and caſt down in me, fearing leſt I had ſome ſecret ſin undiſcovered, and unrepented of, which cauſed the Lord thus to hide his face from me. But then my gracious God brought this into my mind, that the Lord doth ſometimes afflict us for the exerciſe and improvement of our graces, as well as to humble us for our ſins. I alſo conſidered, that as the Lord doth tender great mercies to us in this Sacrament, renewing his Covenant of Grace, and ſealing to us the pardon of our ſins in the Blood of Chriſt; ſo he gives us leave to ingage our ſelves, by renewing our Covenant with him, to believe in him, and to truſt upon Chriſt for Life and Salvation: And it pleaſed God to give me Faith to apply this to my own particular Soul; and a while after to ſhew me, and to make good to my Soul that precious and comfortable promiſe, That tho' *he hides his face from us for a little moment, yet with mercy and loving kindneſs he will return to us again.* This was a wonderful comfort and ſupport to my dejected heart: Bleſſed be the Lord for ever; I deſire to treaſure up theſe Experiences, that for the future, I may in the like caſe, reſolve to put my whole truſt and confidence in him, that ſo Satan may not intrap me in his

snares

ſnares through unbelief, but that I may *reſiſt him, ſtedfaſt in the Faith.* For I am not altogether *ignorant of his devices.* God's promiſe is, that *in all theſe things we ſhall be more than Conquerors, through him that hath loved us:* And hath ſaid, that, *This is the Victory whereby we overcome the World, even our Faith,* 1 John 5. 4.

In the year 1664. there came to us the ſad News of the death of my ſecond Son Mr. *John Clark*, a godly, faithful and powerful Miniſter. Thus as the waves of the Sea follow one another, ſo God is pleaſed to exerciſe his Children with one affliction after another; he ſees whilſt we carry about us this body of ſin, we have need of manifold Tryals and Temptations; as ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. *Now for a ſeaſon ye are in heavineſs, if need be, through manifold temptations*; to keep us under, and to make us the better to remember our ſelves. Indeed it hath been the Lord's courſe and dealing with me, ever ſince he ſtopped me in the way as I was poſting to Hell, to raiſe up one affliction or other, either inward or outward, either from Satan, the World, or my own corrupt heart, and nature; not having wiſdom and grace to behave and carry my ſelf as I ought under his various diſpenſations and providences, as appeared at this time by his laying ſo great and grievous an affliction upon me, in taking away ſo dear a Son, from whom I had much Soul-comfort, and ardent affections, which he manifeſted by his fervent prayers for me, and by his ſpiritual Letters, and Writings to me; wherein he applied himſelf ſuitably to my comfort, in thoſe inward troubles of heart and ſpirit that lay upon me. This cauſed my grief and ſorrows to take the greater hold on me, upon the loſs of one who was ſo uſeful to me: Yet hereby I do not derogate from my Elder Son, from whom I have the like help

help and comfort. Upon this ſad occaſion my grief grew ſo great, that I took no pleaſure of any thing in the World; but was ſo overwhelmed with melancholy, and my natural ſtrength was ſo abated, that little food ſerved my turn, and I judged that I could not live long in ſuch a condition.

Hereupon I began to examine my heart why it ſhould be ſo with me, and whether carnal, and inordinate affections, were not the great cauſe of my trouble, which I much feared. And having uſed many Arguments, and laid down many Reaſons to my ſelf, to quiet and moderate my paſſions, yet nothing prevailed to quiet and calm my heart, and to bow me to the obedience of Gods revealed Will: And withal conſidering that it was God only that could quiet the heart, and ſet our unruly and carnal affections into an holy frame and order, and that he was a preſent help in time of trouble; I often and earneſtly ſought the Lord, with many Prayers and Tears, beſeeching him to quiet my heart, and to over-power, and tame my unruly affections, ſo as to be willing to ſubmit unto him, and to bear his afflicting Hand patiently, and fruitfully, and to be ready and willing to ſubmit, either in doing or ſuffering, whatſoever he pleaſed to impoſe upon me; and to be ready to part with the beſt outward comfort I enjoyed, whenſoever he ſhould pleaſe to call for the ſame.

And it pleaſed God ſeaſonably to hear my Prayer, to regard my Tears, and to grant my Requeſts, by calming and quieting my heart and ſpirit, and to give me much more contentedneſs to ſubmit to his holy Will, and good Pleaſure, who is a God of Judgment, and knows the fitteſt times and ſeaſons to come in with refreſhing comforts, and who waits to be gracious unto thoſe that truſt in him. Yet ſurely I was not without many temptations, in this hour

hour of darkneſs, from that ſubtle Adverſary, who always ſtands at watch to inſinuate and frame his temptations, anſwerable to our conditions, and like *a roaring Lion, walks about continually, ſeeking to devour* poor, yet precious Souls. Then, *I called upon the Lord in my diſtreſs, and he anſwered me, and delivered me. Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul! and all that is within me praiſe his holy Name. For he hath remembred me in my low* and troubled *eſtate, becauſe his mercy endureth for ever.*

Having thus had new Experience of God's readineſs to hear and help, when I called upon him; and having found that it is not in vain to ſeek to, and to depend upon God in all our ſtraits, I could not but record theſe things, that ſo, *Every one that is godly may ſeek unto him in a time wherein he may be found, who is a preſent help in time of trouble, and who doth for us abundantly above what we can aſk or think.* The Lord knows that I write theſe things for no other end, but that God may have the glory, and that others, eſpecially my Relations, may be incouraged to ſeek God in their ſtraits, and to truſt in him at all times. If God ſhall pleaſe to bring me to my Grave in peace, let this be the Text at my Funeral, *Epheſ.* 2. 8. *For by Grace ye are ſaved through Faith.* This Scripture I was oft put upon, to have recourſe to in times of Temptation and Deſertion. Though our hearts may fail us, and our fleſh may fail us, yet the Lord will never fail us. *Amen.*

XXXVIII. John *Earl of* Rocheſter.

I Shall conclude theſe Experiences with an account of one of the moſt Illuſtrious Inſtances of Converſion that hath happened in this, and it may be in many preceding Ages, in the perſon of the Right Honourable *John Wilmot* late Earl of *Rocheſter*, whoſe name

name for irreligion and vice became a Proverb, and whose extraordinary repentance is a most remarkable example of the exceeding riches of the grace and mercy of God.

His father was *Henry* Lord *Wilmot* who in the Civil Wars, adhered to *K. Charles* 1. and was very instrumental in the escape of *K. Charles* 2. after the Battel of *Worcester* in 1651, but dying before the Restoration left his son little more then his Title of Earle of *Rochester*, and some pretensions of the favour of *Charles* 2. after his return. This young Lord was educated in the University of *Oxford*, where his wit and Learning soon made him very eminent; But the general joy and debauchery that overran the Nation in 1660. had in a little time so great an influence upon him, that, he as well as a multitude of other Young Gentlemen ran into all manner of excess, to commit all kind of iniquity with greedines. And after his return from his Travels into *Italy*, having some perferment in the Atheistical and debauch'd Court of *K. Charles* 2. he there met with incouragement & countenance in prosecuting the greatest excesses & extravagancies that were possibly to be acted, for as *Solomon* says, *whatsoever his eyes desired he kept it not from them, and withheld his heart from no joy*; And to fortifie his conscience against any convictions, he endeavoured to persuade himself, that there was no *Heaven* nor *Hell*, no God nor *Devil*, nor any future State in another world; and yet because at some intervals, he had severe reflections in his mind, as to his vicious practices, he was forced to rid himself of them by a continued course of Intemperance, so that he acknowledged that for five years together he was continually drunk.

And as his wickednes, so his wit and parts were extraordinary, so that had his fancy fallen upon Divine Subjects, instead of those impure and filthy ones wherein

wherein he uſually exerciſed his Poetry, he might probably, have been as uſeful in teaching vertue to this debauched generation, as his prophane Verſes have been miſchevous and hurtful in promoting Atheiſm, vice, and lewdneſs. As to all outward accompliſhments of Learning and education, he was therein compleat, though by his ill management they were at length miſerable Comforts to him ſince they only miniſtred to his ſins, and made his example the more fatal and dangerous, ſo that he owned himſelf to be one of the greateſt of ſinners; for his corrupted Parts made his impieties riſe to a high and extraordinary pitch, as the chiefeſt of Angels for knowledge and Power became the moſt degenerate; ſo that his impious actions as well as Writings ſeem to ſoar above the reach and thought of other men, taking as much pains to draw others in, and to pervert the ways of Virtue and Religion, as the Apoſtles and Primitive Saints did to *ſave their own ſouls and thoſe that heard them:* for this was the heightning and amazing circumſtance of his ſins, that he was ſo diligent and induſtrious to recommend and propogate them; to declare his ſin as *Sodom* and not to hide it; framing Arguments for ſin, making Proſelytes to it; and writing Panygiricks upon Vice; ſinging praiſes to the Great Enemy of God, and caſting down Coronets and Crowns before his Throne.

This Character, his Chaplain who Preached his Funeral Sermon, gives of him; and adds, That he was ſo confirmed in ſin, that he lived, and oftentimes almoſt died a Martyr for it; God was ſometimes pleaſed to puniſh him with the effects of his debaucheries, yet he confeſt, that for a long time it had no power to melt him into true Repentance; or if at any time he had ſome lucid intervals from his folly and madneſs, how ſhort and tranſitory were they? all that goodneſs was but as a morning Cloud,

[illegible], and as the early Dew which vaniſhes away; he ſtill returned to the ſame exceſs of Riot, and that with ſo much the more greedineſs the longer he had been detained from it; baniſhing all thoughts of God and a future Account out of his mind: One Inſtance is related, which much confirmed him in his Atheiſtical temper; that he, and another Gentleman of the like humour, had made a ſolemn Compact and Agreement, it may be not without impious circumſtances, that whoever died firſt, ſhould after his death return from the Grave, and give an account to the other of the ſtate of the next World, and whether there was any ſuch thing or no; ſoon after the Gentleman died, but never appearing to give him ſatisfaction, as they had ſtipulated between them, it made him conclude, that a Man died like a Beaſt, and that Soul Soul and Body periſht in the Duſt; ſuch unreaſonable and ſenſleſs fancies had he to ſecure himſelf againſt any Convictions of Conſcience; ſince he had never deſerved that God ſhould ſhew a Miracle to ſatisfie him of that, which his wicked life and practices made him ſecretly deſire might not be true, becauſe it is the intereſt of thoſe that live like Brutes, to wiſh they may dye ſo too; and never be called to the Bar of that God whom their whole Lives have bid defiance unto.

And yet even this deſperate Sinner, that ſeemed to have made a Covenant with death, and was at agreement with Hell, and juſt upon the brink of them both; God, to manifie the riches of his Grace and Mercy, was pleaſed to ſnatch as a brand out of the fire. And, as the Apoſtle, *though before a blaſphemer, a perſecutor, and injurious, yet obtained mercy, that in him Chriſt Jeſus might ſhew forth all long-ſuffering, for a pattern to them that ſhould after believe on him to eternal life*, 1 Tim. 1. 13, 16. So

God

God ſtruck him to the ground as it were by a light from Heaven, and a voice of Thunder round about him; inſomuch that now the ſcales fall from his Eyes, as they did from the Apoſtle *Paul's*, his ſtony heart was opened, and ſtreams of tears guſht out, the bitter, but wholſom tears of true Repentance.

The means which prepared the way for this wonderful change, was a ſharp and painful ſickneſs with which he was viſited, which the Almighty often makes uſe of to reduce the wandring Sinner to the knowledge of God, and of himſelf. And though to forſake our ſins, then, when we can no longer commit them, ſeems to be rather neceſſity than choice; yet we often find that God uſes one to bring about the other, and improves a forced abſtinence from ſin into a ſettled loathing, and a true deteſtation of it. As in the caſe of *Manaſſeh*, in 2 *Coron.* And of the Prodigal Son, *Luke* 20. And God ſaith of *Ephraim*, *I will be unto* Ephraim *as a Lion; I will tear and go away, and none ſhall relieve him, till they acknowledge their offence, and ſeek my face; and in their affliction they will ſeek me early*, *Hoſ.* 5. 14, 15. Though ſome ſtubborn Natures fly in the face of their heavenly Father while he is correcting them; and others are like to thoſe Children, who, while under the Rod, promiſe wonders, and preſently forget all; As the Pſalmiſt ſays, *When he ſlew them, then they ſought him, and they returned and enquired early after God, nevertheleſs they did but flatter him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their tongues, for their heart was not right with him, nor continued they ſtedfaſt in his Covenant*, Pſal. 78. 34, &c. And probably this had been this Penitents Caſe formerly; but there was an evident difference betwixt the effect of this laſt ſickneſs upon him, and many others before;

for

for he told the Minister, that he had now other sentiments and thoughts of things, and acted upon quite different Principles; he was not vext that his sickness was painful, or that it hindred him from his sins, which he longed again to be at; but submitted patiently to it, accepted it as the hand of God, and was thankful, blessing and praising God not only in his extremities, but for them also.

And whereas formerly he had so habituated himself to cursing and swearing, that he used it almost every minute; there were now no cursings, no railings, nor reproaches to his Servants, or those about him, which in other sicknesses were their usual entertainments; but he treated them with all the meekness and patience in the World, begging pardons frequently of the meanest of his Attendants but for an hasty word, which the extremity of his sickness, and sharpness of his disease (proceeding from an Ulcer in his Bladder, which caused his Urine to pass from him with intolerable pain) might easily force from him. Of which one instance is related, that calling for something which he thought was not brought him soon enough, he cryed, *that damned Fellow*, but being gently admonisht, instantly recollected himself, complaining of that Language of Hell or Feinds, which he said had been formerly so familiar to him, that it still hung about him, whereas none deserved to be damned more than he had done; and desired to ask his Servants pardon for that rash saying.

His Prayers were not now so much for ease, or health, or a continuance of his life, as for grace and faith, and perfect resignation to the will of God; so that it may be charitably and justly concluded, that his sickness was not the chief ingredient

dient, but through the grace of God, an effectual means of true, tho' late Repentance: For tho' it was a Death-bed Repentance, and therefore full of danger, and the utmoſt hazard, yet it was not wholly impoſſible to be true, nor abſolutely deſperate; ſince that God, who is a God of infinite compaſſion and forbearance, allowed him leiſure and opportunity for Repentance by a long and lingring ſickneſs; That he awaken'd him out of his ſpiritual ſlumber by a pungent diſtemper, as to provide prudently for his worldly affairs, and yet not to be diſtracted nor diverted by them from the thoughts of a better World; that God lengthened out his day of grace, and accompanied the ordinary means of Salvation, and the weak *Miniſtry* of his Word, with the convincing and over-ruling power of his Spirit to his Conſcience, which Word of God became to him quick and powerful, ſharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of his Soul and Spirit: And at laſt the Spirit of God witneſſed to his Spirit, that now he was become one of the Children of God.

Upon my firſt Viſit to him (ſaith the Miniſter) at his return from a Jonrney out of the Weſt, he moſt gladly received me, ſhewed me extraordinary reſpects upon the ſcore of my Office, and thanked God, who had in mercy and good providence ſent me to him, who ſo much needed my prayers and counſels, acknowledging how unworthily heretofore he had treated Miniſters of the Goſpel, reproaching them that they were proud, and propheſied only for reward; but now he had learnt how to value them, that he eſteemed them the Servants of the moſt High God, who were to ſhew to him the way to Everlaſting Life. At the ſame time I found him labouring under ſtrange trouble and conflicts of mind, his Spirit wounded, and his Conſcience full

of terrour. Upon this Journey he told me, he had been arguing with greater vigour against God and Religion than ever he had done in his life-time before, and that he was resolved to run them down with all the arguments and spite in the World. But, like the great Convert St. *Paul*, he found it hard to kick against the pricks. For God at that time had so struck his heart by his immediate hand, that presently he argued as strongly for God and Virtue as before he had done against it. He declared, that God strangely opened his heart, creating in his mind most awful, and tremendous thoughts and apprehensions of the Divine Majesty, with a delightful contemplation of the Divine Nature and Attributes, and of the loveliness of Religion and Virtue; 'I never, said he, was advanced thus far toward 'happiness in my life before; for tho' upon the 'commissions of some sins extraordinary, I have 'had some checks and warnings considerable from 'within, yet I still struggled with 'em, and so wore 'them off again. The most observable I remember, 'said he, was this: One day at an Atheistical 'Meeting at a Person of *Qualities*, I undertook to 'manage the Cause, and was the principal Disputant against God and Piety, and for my performances received the applause of the whole Company: Upon which my mind was terribly struck, 'and I immediately replied thus to my self: Good 'God! that a man that walks upright, that sees 'the wonderful works of God, and has the uses 'of his sense and reason, should use them to the 'defying of his Creator! But tho' this was a good 'beginning towards my Conversion, to find my 'Conscience touched for my sins, yet it wore off 'again; yet all my life long I had a secret value 'and reverence for an honest man, and lov'd Morality in others; but I had formed an odd Scheme

of

'of Religion to my self, which would solve all 'that God or Conscience might force upon me; yet 'I was not ever well reconciled to the business of 'Religion, nor had that reverence for the Gospel 'as I ought to have.

This Estate of mind continued till the 53. chapter of *Isaiah* was read to him wherein there is a lively discription of the sufferings of our saviour, and the benefits thereof and some other portions of Scripture: by the power and efficacy of which word, assisted by his holy spirit, God so wrought upon his heart that he declared, that the mysteries of the Passion appeared so clear and plain to him as ever any thing did that was represented in a glass; so that the joy and admiration which possessed his soul upon the reading of Gods word to him was remarkable to all about him, and he had so much delight in his Testimonies, that he begged his mother and Lady to read the same to him frequently, and was unsatisfied notwithstanding his great pains aud weakness, till he had learned especialy, the 53. chapter of *Isaiah* without book, comparing this prophecy with the Passion of Christ in the Evangelists, and observing that it was clearly foretold by the Prophet some hundred of years before it was accomplished; and this consideration had such mighty influence upon his soul, and strengthned his faith, that afterward he never had the least doubt about the certainty of the Gospel and eternal salvation by Jesus Christ; He said the in the first verse of that chapter the prophet declared what great opposition the Doctrine of Christ Crucified would meet with in the world from such obstinate sinners as he was, *who hath believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed.* And that the lowliness of his condition and person upon earth would cause weak, and inconsidering men to undervalue him, because he did not appear with the

vain ſplendor&pomp wherin they were pleaſed. This he ſaid was plainly predicted in the ſecond verſe. *He hath no form or comlineſs; and when we ſhall ſee him, there is no beauty, that we ſhould deſire him.*

At the ſame time diſcourſing of the manner of his youth up, which all men knew was too too much devoted to the ſervice of ſin, and that the luſts of the fleſh, of the eye, and the pride of life had captivated him: He was very large and particular in his acknowledgments about it, and more ready to accuſe himſelf than any other could be, Publickly crying out O Bleſſe God, can ſuch an horrid creature as I 'am be accepted by thee, who has denied thy 'Being and contemned thy Power? can there 'be Pardon and mercy for me? will God own ſuch a 'wretch as I am? ſhall the unſpeakable joys of hea-'ven be conferred upon me? O Mighty Saviour! 'never but through thine infinite love and ſatisfact-'ion! O never, but by the purchaſe of thy blood! 'Adding that with all abhorrency he did reflect up-'on his former courſe of life; that ſincerely and 'from his heart he did repent of all that folly and madneſs which he had committed. He had a true and lively ſenſe of God's great mercy to him in ſtrikeing his hard heart, and laying his conſcience open, which hitherto had been deaf to all God's calls and methods, ſaying 'If that God who dyed for Great 'as well as Leſſer ſinners, did not ſpeedily apply 'his infinite merits to his poor ſoul, his wound was 'ſuch as no man could conceive or bear, Crying 'out, that he was the vileſt wretch and Dog that 'the ſun ſhined upon, or the earth bore; that now 'he ſaw his error in not living up to that Reaſon 'which God had endued him with, and which he 'had unworthily vilified and contemned; wiſhing 'that he had been a ſtarving Leper, crawling in a 'ditch, that he had been a link boy, or a beggar,

'or

'or for his whole lifetime confined to a Dungeon, 'rather than thus to have sinned against his 'God.

His faith was remarkable, in an hearty embracing and pious Confession of all the Articles of the Christian Religion, and all the Divine mysteries of the Gospel, saying; that the absurd and foolish Philosophy 'which the world so much admired, pro-'pogated by the late Mr. *Hobs*, and others, had 'undone him, and many more, of the best Parts in 'the nation; who without Gods great mercy, may never, it may be, attain to such a serious repentance as his was, He faithfully adhered to, and cast himself entirely upon the mercies of Jesus Christ, and the free grace of God declared to repenting sinners thro' him, with a thankful remembrance of his life, Death and resurrection; begging of God to strengthen his faith, and often crying out *Lord I believe help thou mine unbelief.* He had a mighty love for and esteem of the holy Scriptures, which he had formerly too much slighted and ridicul'd; taking up resolutions to read them frequently, and meditate upon them if God should spare him, having already tasted the good word; for having spoken to his heart, he acknowledged all the 'seeming absurdities and con-'tradictions thereof, fancied by men of corrupt and 'reprobate judgments were vanished and their ex-'cellencies and beauty appeared, being come to receive 'the truth in the love of it.

He was extraordinary fervent and frequent in his prayers and supplications, and often called upon others to pray for and with him, or to read the Scriptures to him: and toward the end of his sickness would heartily desire God to pardon his infirmities if he should not be so wakeful & intent thro' the duty as he wished to be; and that tho' the flesh was weak, yet the *Spirit* was willing, and hoped God

would accept that. He continually beſeeched God by his grace and Holy Spirit to ſuſtain him and to keep him from all evil thoughts, from all temptations and Diabolical ſuggeſtions, and every thing that might be prejudicial to that religious temper of mind which God had now ſo happily endued him withal: Crying out one night eſpecially 'how terribly the Tempter did aſſault him by caſting upon him, lewd and 'wicked imaginations, but I thank God ſaid he, I 'abhor them all, and by the power of his grace 'which I am ſure is ſufficient for me, I have overcome them; t'is the malice of the Devil becauſe 'I am reſcued from him: and the goodneſs of God 'that frees me from all my ſpiritual enemies.

He was very joyful at his Lady's converſion from Popery, being as he termed it, a faction ſupported only by fraud and cruelty; which was done by her with deliberation and mature judgment. He was heartily concerned for the pious education of his Children, wiſhing that his ſon might never be a 'wit; that is, ſaid he that he might never be one 'of thoſe wretched Creatures who pride themſelves 'in abuſing God and Religion, denying his being or 'his ptovidence; but that he might become an honeſt, and a religious man, which could only be the 'ſupport and bleſſing of his family; complaining what a vicious and naughty world his children were 'brought into, and that no fortunes or honours were 'comparable to the love and favour of God to them, in whoſe name he bleſſed them, prayed for them and committed them to his Protection. He had one ſon and three daughters and once calling them all before him, he ſaid to a Gentleman then preſent, that he might there obſerve how good the Almighty had been to him, in beſtowing ſo many bleſſings upon him, but that he had carried himſelf to God like an ungratious and unthankful Dog.

He

He gave ſtrict charge to thoſe Perſons in whoſe cuſtody his papers were, to burn all his prophane and leud writings, as being only fit to promote vice and immorality, by which he had ſo highly offended God, and ſhamed and blaſphemed that holy Religion into which he had been baptized; and all his obſcene and filthy pictures which were ſo notoriouſly ſcandalous. He ſhewed much readineſs to make reſtitution to the utmoſt of his power to all perſons whom he had injured, and for thoſe whom he could not make compenſation to, he prayed for God's, and there pardons. And he was remarkably juſt in taking all poſſible care for the payment of his debts, which before he confeſſed he had not ſo fairly and effectualy done. He was exceeding ready to forgive all injuries done againſt him, ſome of which he particularly mentioned, which were great and provoking, yet he was willing not only to pardon them, but likewiſe to give them aſſurance of his future friendſhip; and hoping that he ſhould be as freely forgiven at the hand of God. He was very tender and concerned for his ſervants who were about him in his extremities, (to whom he was very kind by his laſt Will) pitying there troubles in watching with him, and attending him, treating them with candor and gentleneſs as if they had been his Equals.

He heartily endeavoured to be ſerviceble to thoſe about him, exhorting them to the fear and love of God, and to make good uſe of his forbearance and long ſuffering to ſinners, which ſhould lead them to repentance. And particularly a Perſon of Quality coming to viſit him on his death bed, he addreſſed him with this moſt pious and moſt paſſionate exclamation. 'O Remember that you contemn God no more, He is an avenging God and will viſit you for your ſins; and will in mercy I hope touch

'you

'your conſcience ſooner or later, as he hath done 'mine, you and I have been friends and ſinners 'together a great while, therefore I am the more 'free with you, we have been all miſtaken in our 'conceits and opinions, our perſuaſions have been 'falſe and groundleſs, therefore God grant you re-'pentance, and ſeeing the ſame Gentleman the 'next day again, he ſaid to him, perhaps you were 'diſobliged by my plainess to you yeſterday, I ſpake 'the words of truth and ſoberneſs to you, and ſtri-'king his hand upon his breaſt he added, I hope 'God will turn your heart. And he commanded his 'Chaplain to preach abroad and to let all men 'know, if they knew it not already, how ſeverely 'God had diſciplin'd him for his ſins, by his afflict-'ing hand: that his ſufferings were moſt juſt, tho 'he had laid ten thouſand times more upon him; 'How he had laid one ſtripe upon another becauſe 'of his grievous provocations till he had brought 'him home to himſelf; That his former viſitations 'had not that bleſſed effect which he was now ſen-'ſible of, He had formerly ſome looſe thoughts and '& ſlight reſolutions of reforming, and deſigned-'to be better, becauſe even the preſent conſequen-'ces of ſin were ſtill peſtering him, and were ſo 'troubleſome and inconvenient to him; but that he 'had now other ſentiments of things, and acted upon 'other principles. He gave it another learned Di-'vine in charge, not to ſpare him (if he ſhould dye) 'in publiſhing any thing which might be of uſe 'to the Living, being willing that the worſt as well 'as the beſt part of his life ſhould be expoſed; ſo ſincere was he in his repentance, as to be willing to take ſhame to himſelf, by ſuffering his faults to be expoſed for the benefit of others: *Praying* God that as his life had done much hurt, ſo his death might do ſome good.

Laſtly,

Laſtly, He diſcovered a great willingneſs to dye, if it pleaſed God; reſigning himſelf always to the Divine diſpoſal; but if God ſhould ſpare him yet a longer time here, he hoped to bring glory to the Name of God in the whole courſe of his life, and particularly by his endeavours to convince others, and to aſſure them of the danger of their condition if they continued impenitent, and how graciouſly God had dealt with him; being deſirous to live upon no other account, but that by the change of his manners, and his former company, and courſe of life, he might in ſome meaſure take off the high ſcandal that his former behaviour had given. He had a great ſenſe of his Obligations to thoſe worthy Divines who charitably and frequently viſited him, and prayed with him, and were thereby all very ſerviceable to his Repentance. *I* ſhall conclude theſe Remarks with his Dying Remonſtrance ſigned by his own hand, as his trueſt ſenſe, which is as follows.

'For the benefit of all thoſe whom I have drawn 'into ſin, by my Example and Encouragement, I 'leave to the World this my laſt Declaration, which 'I deliver in the preſence of the Great God, who 'knows the ſecrets of all hearts, and before whom 'I am now appearing to be judged;

'That from the bottom of my Soul I deteſt and 'abhor the whole courſe of my former wicked life; 'that I think I can never ſufficiently admire the 'goodneſs of God, who has given me a true ſenſe 'of my pernicious Opinions and vile Practices, by 'which I have hitherto lived without hope, and 'without God in the World; have been an open 'Enemy to Jeſus Chriſt, doing the utmoſt deſpite 'to the Holy Spirit of Grace. And that the 'greateſt Teſtimony of my Charity to ſuch is, to

warn them in the name of God, and as they regard the welfare of their immortal souls, no more to deny his Being, or his providence, or despise his goodness, no more to make a mock of sin, or contemn the pure and excellent Religion of my ever blessed Redeemer, through whose merits alone, I one of the greatest of sinners do yet hope for mercy and forgiveness, *Amen.*

Declared and signed June 19. 1680. J. Rochester.
in the presence of

Ann Rochester.
Robert Parsons.

He enjoyed a steddy temper of mind through the whole course of his sickness and repentance, which must needs proceed not from a hurry or perturbation of mind or body arising from the fear of death, or dread of Hell only, but from an ingenious love to God, and an uniform regard to virtue, suitable to that solemn Declaration of his; *I would not commit the least sin to gain a kingdom*; And he had all possible symptoms of a lasting perseverance in this admirable Christian Resolution, if God had restored him to health. To which may be added his comfortable persuasions of God's accepting him to his mercy, saying three or four days before his death; I shall dye, but Oh what unspeakable Glories do I see! what joys beyond thought or expression am I sensible of! I am assured of God's mercy to me through Jesus Christ. Oh how I long to dye, and to be with my Saviour.

The time of his sickness and repentance was just nine weeks, in all which space he was so much master of his reason, and had so clear an understanding, except about thirty hours in which he was delirious,

ſirous, that he never dictated or ſpoke more compoſed in his life. And therefore if any ſhall continue to ſay, his Piety was the effect of madneſs or vapours, the aſſertion is as ſilly as it is wicked; And that the force of this great penitence may not be evaded by evil men, who are reſolved to harden their hearts againſt all convictions, by ſaying it was done in a corner; the truth hereof is very well known to all ſorts of perſons, who in conſiderable numbers viſited and attended him, and particularly by thoſe eminent Phiſitians who were converſant with him inthe whole courſe of his tedious ſickneſs, and who if any, were competent judges whether he were in a phrenſie or diſtracted, who all declared that he had not the leaſt Symptoms of it, but was as ſenſible as at any time in his life and health. And if any ſhall be ſtill unſatiſfied herein, in this hard hearted generation, it matters not, let them at their coſt be Unbelievers ſtill, ſo long as this excellent penitent enjoys the comfort of his repentance; ſince from all theſe admirable ſigns we have great reaſon to believe comfortably that his repentance was real and his end happy; and we may accordingly imitate the neighbours and Coſens of Elizabeth *Luke* 1. 58. who when they heard how the *Lord* had ſhewed great *mercy upon her, came and rejoyced with her*, and herein we ſhall joyn with the whole Court of Heaven, ſince our Bleſſed Saviour has told us. *Luke.* 15 7. *I ſay unto you, that joy ſhall be in heaven over one ſinner that repenteth more then over ninety and nine Perſons that need no repentance.* He dyed without convulſion or groan at Woodſtock Park in Oxfordſhire July. 26. 1680.

Poſtſcript.

Postscript.

AN account of the duty and usefulness of communicating Experiences is already given; I shall only add, that if any should take offence at the publishing of these Experiences, and judge it unmeet, especially because ill men may make a bad use of them, I desire such to consider that wicked Persons will take all opportunities to scandalize Religion, though no occasion be given; and they will likewise abuse the best of things to evil purposes; Yet the Prophet *David* says, *Come and hear all ye that fear the Lord, and I will declare what he hath done for my Soul. Restore unto me the joy of my salvation, then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee*, Ps. 51. So that this declaring of Experiences is one means which we may expect the Lord will make successful to the Conversion of sinners. And indeed the Book of Psalms is presented to the eyes of all men both good and bad, and doth consist for the most part of Experiences. And *Paul* declareth the manner of his conversion to those that persecuted him; and the Apostle *Peter* bids us be ready alwayes to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear. There are several other uses and advantages from declaring Experiences which are mentioned in the beginning, to which the Reader is referred. I shall conclude all with repeating my earnest desires, that this small tract may be of some profit to the souls of men, and then my design in publishing it will be answered. *W. D.*

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